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# **PAKISTAN**

**AND**

# **THE MIDDLE EAST**

by

**M. AHMAD**

*With a foreward by the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Shahabuddin  
Minister of the Interior, Information and Broadcasting,  
Government of Pakistan.*

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## PREFACE

What role can Pakistan and the Middle East play in the new pattern of world powers is the question seriously engaging our attention. Two great poles of power, in command of colossal unprecedented war potential, now again face each other. Can Pakistan and Middle Eastern States remain secure in the event of a general conflagration if they simply maintain the status quo? Can they save themselves if they separately or collectively align themselves with either of the two warring groups? Or does the solution lie in a very close form of alliance between Muslim States, on the model of Western Union, which may give pause to any potential aggressor? These and several other political, economic, and social problems have been discussed in this book with a view to enable the peoples of Muslim States to chalk out a policy which may be advantageous to all in the long run.

The first chapter analyses the various factors which have made this region an important arena of political and commercial rivalries of the great powers. Pointing out its strategic importance, its valuable resources, including oil and cotton, and its great possibilities as a market for consumer and capital goods, this chapter also deals with the diplomatic activities in this region during the last hundred years, the nationalist movement, the growth of Communism and the Arab League.

(ii)

The second chapter traces the day-to-day developments in Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Iran and Afghanistan. While the foreign policies of these States have been specifically reviewed, due attention has also been paid to domestic affairs and ministerial changes since 1939.

The third chapter assesses the great contribution made by the people of the world's largest Muslim State, Pakistan, to the cause of their brethren in the Middle East. It quotes extracts from letters exchanged between some top-ranking Arabs and leaders of Pakistan and proves the great affinity which has always existed among persons inhabiting this region in ideas, outlook and policies.

The last chapter discusses the policies of India, Britain, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. towards Pakistan and the Middle East. Suggesting that the security set-up faces special dangers, it pleads for close cooperation and active vigilance against powers which threaten the sovereignty and hard-won freedom of the Arabs, the Turks, the Iranians, the Afghans and the Pakistanis.

1948

M. AHMAD



## FOREWORD

*by*

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Shahabuddin, Minister  
of the Interior, Information and Broadcasting,  
Government of Pakistan.

The sense of cohesion, whose absence during the last so many years had reduced the vast region stretching from Pakistan to Egypt into a loose unit, divided into separate entities having relatively little to do with each other, and often looking outward to the foreign powers, is once again gaining considerable momentum. The reasons for this upsurge may chiefly be ascribed to the grave external dangers, which threaten the integrity of these States, the attainment of greater political freedom, the common economic and strategic problems, the easy means of communications, the geographical contiguity, the age-old connections, the ties of a more or less homogeneous culture, the pride in past heroes and achievements and the unifying force of religion.

With the birth of Pakistan, the outlook of the people of this land has also undergone a radical change. Hitherto living under the galling yoke of alien rule and native caste-hegemony, the Muslims had no opportunity to develop their destiny according to their own genius. Their real voice was stifled, their Press was gagged and they were forced to view the world only through borrowed glasses. The impediments having been removed, Pakistan is now endeavouring her best to establish closer cultural, economic and political relations with the neighbouring countries, the largest group of whom are Muslim States.

(iv)

It may justifiably be assumed that because of the community of outlook based on spiritual and moral affinities, literature, science and philosophy, the bonds uniting the Muslim States will become stronger everyday. Already Pakistan has established four cultural Associations to promote relations with the Arab States, Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey. These contacts may be stabilised through the exchange of students, teachers and literature, cultural missions of eminent scholars, delegations of journalists and holding of conferences at regular intervals. This collaboration established in the fields of arts and letters, educational experiments and scientific researches, can also be followed by close economic cooperation.

Both Pakistan and the Middle Eastern States are more or less faced with the same economic problems. The region displays all stages of agricultural development from the immemorial nomadic pastoral to the most advanced irrigation farming. The rural population density varies from intense to sparse. The systems of land ownership and tenure, and the problems—economic, agricultural and the sociological to which they give rise, are of great complexity. The general trend is towards industrialisation and the realisation of long-standing capital improvements but the difficulties, the shortage of technical personnel and capital goods are also faced by Muslim States in common.

Efforts should therefore be made to organise and co-ordinate the economic activities of these States in a way so as to produce the best possible results, by the elimination of conflict in their economic policies, the coordination of production and the development of commercial exchanges. Such

(v)

economic cooperation undertaken on a regional basis would not be opposed to the interests of the great industrial exporting countries, who by an intelligent and sympathetic adaptation, can assist this area in achieving a higher standard of living and thereby securing a larger and more profitable market for high-class capital goods

As far as the political and defence arrangements are concerned, most of the detached observers are unanimously of the opinion that here too closer cooperation is equally essential

I welcome the publication of the book at a time when better and closer understanding between Pakistan and Middle East countries is most desirable. It will help the people of these countries to study the grave problems that confront them.



## CHAPTER I

# THE COCKPIT

For generations the Middle East has afforded periodic inducements for political and economic competition by the Great Powers of the world. Nowhere did visions of empire struggle for mastery with greater vigour than in this potential war region. Imperialism here has been and still remains not merely a dynamic factor transforming the life of the people, but also a menace to the peace of the world.

/ The term "Middle East" is of relatively recent origin. Formerly it signified the 'Levant' and the whole of the area from the Dardanelles to the Great Wall of China, excluding Egypt. During the second World War the Allied Headquarters, located at Cairo, used the term for the whole of North Africa as well as rest of the Muslim countries up to the border of India. There is, however, nothing sacred about the term and it may be taken to connote the region stretching from the Cyrenaican-Egyptian frontier in the East and from the Russo-Turkish frontier in the North to the Southern limits of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan in the South. It includes Egypt, the Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the British Arabian and Persian Gulf Protectorates, Palestine, Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. /

### Strategic Points

The reason why the Middle East looms so increasingly important in world affairs is universally ascribed to its strategic and geographical position. From the dawn of history this region has constituted the nerve-centre of all mercantile

activities of the world. It commanded the most ancient route by which the goods, received at the Persian Gulf from the Far East, were sent by caravan to the Syrian sea-board, and from Tyre and Sidon were distributed by the Phoenicians to the people of the West. Holding key positions on this trunk line, Basra, Baghdad and Damascus rose to unrivalled prominence and subsequently excited the jealousies of ambitious oriental rulers. As strategic points still remain somewhat the same, the few great arterial routes in this region have been the cause of friction down to the most modern days.

At present there are two so-called land routes from Europe to the Middle East. One runs from the Balkans through Constantinople and the Straits to Asia Minor. Turkey lies on this route and constitutes a bridge between Asia and Europe. The lands that surround it have been a coveted object throughout history. Since this territory on each side of the Bosphorous has been in the same hand, the Balkan route has been closed or at least only open with the concurrence of the Power ruling in Constantinople. The other route connecting Europe runs from Southern Russia across the narrow strip of land between the Black Sea and Caspian to North Iran and Asia Minor. This route was contested not only in the days of the Romans and the Parthians but a desperate bid was made for it during the two World Wars.

The other strategic points are the Cilician gates in the Taurus, and the Syrian gates in the Amanus Mountains behind Alexandretta. It is said that whoever owns the one also aims at having the other. Though Alexandretta was awarded to Turkey by France in 1940, the diplomatic

contest over it still continues. Palestine is equally important and serves as a bridge between Africa and Asia. Much of its value depends upon Haifa, the third largest harbour in the Eastern Mediterranean, offering a possible alternative to Cyprus or Alexandria as an Eastern Mediterranean naval base. It is traversed by railways linking Egypt with Syria and has got an air-route, a motor-route and a pipe-line. Transjordan also commands a key position. It forms a buffer between Syria and Palestine in the North and Saudi Arabia in the South and also constitutes a link between Palestine in the West and Iran in the East. It is traversed by the Hejaz Railway, the only means of rapid communication between Syria and Saudi Arabia. The oil pipe-line to Haifa, the air-route to Pakistan and the Haifa-Baghdad motor route also run through Transjordan.

The Suez Canal is another point of great strategic value. The clearest statement about its importance was made in 1882 by Sir Charles Dilke, Under-Secretary in charge of the Commercial Division of the British Foreign Office, who said, "The Canal is the principal highway to India, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, and British Burma, where 250,000 people live under our rule, and also China where we have vast interests and 84 per cent. of the external trade of that still more enormous empire. It is also one of the roads to our Colonial Empire in Australia and New Zealand". To protect the Canal permanently, Dilke believed, it was necessary to control Egypt. "The dominance of a purely military faction at Cairo" said he, "must place our communications with India and the East in permanent jeopardy". For those who are dependent upon the sea-route and who do not

come through the Mediterranean, the way to Arabia, Iraq and Iran runs through the Persian Gulf. The British policy regarding the Persian Gulf has remained the same as laid down by Lord Lansdowne, British Foreign Secretary who declared in the House of Lords, "I say it without hesitation, we should regard the establishment of a naval base or of a fortified port in the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a grave menace to British interests, and we shall certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal"

Iraq, which is a British civil and military air depot for the whole of the Middle East, owes its importance to the Persian Gulf. Its capital, Baghdad, is the centre from which the roads radiate to Istanbul, Beirut, Haifa, Basra and Teheran. The strategic value of Arabian Peninsula cannot also be minimised. Its western and southern coasts flank the main sea-route between Europe and the East. Britain controls the four corners of the peninsula—Aqaba, Aden, Oman and Kuwait. The British keenness to retain supremacy over these points was emphasised by Mr. Anthony Eden on July 19, 1937, "It has always been and it is today, a major British interest that no Great Power should establish itself on the eastern shore of the Red Sea". Afghanistan and Iran are also of no less importance. They constitute a buffer between Russia and Pakistan and prevent Russia's southward expansion to water harbours. Because of their geographical position these countries have put the British and Russian diplomacy to the hardest test during the last hundred years.

What significant part these strategic points played during the first World War can be examined by the detailed accounts given by a German journalist, Margaret Boveri. There were in the Middle East four separate theatres of war. First, there was the struggle for the Dardanelles. This was a European affair and involved the question whether the European Power, Russia, might advance unhindered from the Black Sea, and also whether the European Powers in the Mediterranean might freely enter the Black Sea. Secondly, there was the struggle for the Caucasus, Georgia, Armenia, and Northern Iran. This was a war between Turks and Russians, which was carried on with varying fortunes, and in which the English sought to intervene only after the breakdown of the Russian forces. Thirdly, there was the struggle for the Suez Canal and the upper end of the Red Sea, which later resolved itself into a struggle for Syria. Here the English fought against the Turks and the Germans. Finally, there was the war in Iraq in which the Turks fought gallantly.

The efforts of the Allies were directed towards establishing communications between the various seats of war, that is to say between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, between Egypt, Syria and Iraq and between Iraq, North Iran and Armenia. The aim of the Central Powers was to prevent any such connection, at the same time to keep as many as possible of the Allied forces in Asia, and to destroy the British source of supply, especially the oil pipe-lines and the refinery of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company between Ahwaz and Abadan.



Though the Middle East did not actually become the battle-ground between the Allies and the Axis during the second World War, the whole region stood in constant danger of being enveloped in its flames. What great importance the military strategists attached to this region is conclusively proved by several facts. According to the plan, prepared under Dr. Eilers in 1934, Germany was credited with the aim of conquering the Eastern world as far as the Persian Gulf. After the outbreak of Russo-German war in 1941, the Allied military observers were convinced that after taking over the Ukraine, Germany would pause on the Caucasian oil-fields without touching the rest of the U.S.S.R. It was also presumed that Germany would then make a two-fold drive from the Caucasian frontier through Iran and Turkey to Mosul, and farther east towards Qazwin and Teheran and at the same time, if convenient, launch a campaign through Turkey, Syria and Egypt. Even India was threatened with German aggression. The New Delhi correspondent of the London "Times" wrote in May, 1941, "As a strategic zone Iran offers better approaches to India than Afghanistan, and it is the most appropriate area for German intervention between India and the Imperial forces in the Middle East. The wide open spaces of Iranian plateau lend themselves to the easy movement of modern armies, an advance of extensive German forces by this route would constitute a double threat to the security of India, whether by way of Afghanistan and the mountain approaches of Kandhar and the Khýber or, further south, across the frontier of Iran with Baluchistan".

The fears expressed then are now treated lightly. It cannot, however, be denied that it was the terror of grandiose German schemes that forced the Allies to

concentrate their entire resources in the Middle East. Nothing appeared more important to Britain than the safeguarding of the sea, land and air routes to India, the Far East and Australia. Thus the defence of Cairo and Baghdad, the first commanding the Suez Canal and the Red Sea, the second the Baghdad Railway and the Persian Gulf became the guiding principle in British policy. The formation of a solid bloc of friendly countries in the Middle East became essential as a barrier to Hitler's progress towards the Indian Ocean. This the Allies achieved by the formation of a nucleus of Egypt, Syria, Iraq and India under the one command of Lord Wavell. The one weak link was Iran. The gap was filled by its occupation. It would be no exaggeration to say that the results of this war might have been reversed, had the Middle East not afforded bases to the Allies in its war against Germany. It is a pity that the Western Powers do not recognise with gratitude the contributions made by this region to Allied victory.

### **Exploitable Market**

The Middle East does not only derive its importance from its geographical position but also from the presence of valuable resources including oil and cotton. Its great possibilities as a market for consumer and even capital goods make it an important arena of commercial and political activities of the Great Powers. When the Ottoman and Iranian Empires became increasingly corrupt, oppressive and weak, they fell an easy prey to the commercial imperialism of Britain and Russia, and to a lesser degree of France and Germany and U.S.A.

The outlet for exploitation to foreigners was first provided by the grant of Capitulations and loans to foreign bankers. Thus after the Crimean war the Turkish empire raised a loan of £ 7,000,000 which by the year 1881 reached the sum of £ 250,000,000. The creditor countries soon combined and the famous 'Ottoman Debt' came into being, having as its shareholders France, Germany, Britain, Italy, Austria and Hungary. It became the most powerful institution in the empire, because certain taxes were earmarked for it. And, not content to receive money from the hands of the Turkish fiscal authorities, it began to collect its own taxes. One power secured the tobacco monopoly, another the harbour monopoly, a third the monopoly for the manufacture of the fez. England, Germany, France, Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia also established their postal system in the empire. The public debt festered like a wound for years, until after the first world war it was divided up among the successor states to the Ottoman empire. The capitulations continued in Egypt and were abolished as late as the year 1936.

In Iran matters were equally bad due to the rivalry of the Great Powers. The financial sphere provided a field for adventurers in Teheran more than in Constantinople. More than one company was formed to work nickel, copper, gold and silver mines. But they all came to grief over difficulties of labour and transport. In 1871 the Iranian Government and the English Baron Julius de Reuter determined to set the country on its feet again by the creation of a gigantic commercial trust. This displeased the Russians. The Shah therefore revoked the concession.

Baron Reuter who had made the preliminary payment of hundred thousand pounds was disgusted. In 1889, he was, however, granted a new concession for the establishment of a Bank. This became known as the Imperial Bank of Iran and had the sole rights of issue. In this way the Iranian finances came into English hands. The Russians of course did not lag behind. They founded the Banque d'Escompte de Persa. Though it worked at a loss, but by means of mortgage loans it laid its hands upon a great part of Iranian property. Next the Russians attacked the customs system. By the Iranian-Russian Convention of 1902 the duties on the chief Russian imports, petroleum and sugar were lowered from five per cent to one and a half per cent, while the duties on English imports such as tea were raised from five per cent to one hundred per cent. The English were dismayed. After some hesitation they followed suit and also concluded a customs agreement with Iran.

No better example can be given to expose the commercial exploitation of the Middle East than the one afforded by the hostility of European Powers to the appointment of Mr. W. Morgan Schuster, an American appointed to re-organise finances of Iran. The foreign interests were vexed. For, they thought if the Iranian finances were put in order and the country became fully independent again, they would have spent huge sums of money in vain. An actual war broke out in Tabriz and Mr. Schuster had to quit the country.

• The raw materials of this region have also excited the greed of foreign powers, Palestine, for example, produces

increasing amounts of valuable minerals from the Red Sea. Egypt supplies high grade cotton. Furthermore the region, largely agrarian but with a population almost half that of the United States, offers a large potential market. The Western Powers are making efforts to capture these exploitable markets. Marked increases have been recorded in the American and British exports to the Arab countries during the last decade. According to the statistical account of the first nine months of 1946, the British exports to these countries showed an increase of from three to six times on the same period of 1945. Syria and the Lebanon and Saudi Arabia took five times more than they had received in 1945. Sudan's imports registered a rise of 200 per cent. Palestine figures showed a six-fold jump on 1945. Wrong conclusions, however, should not be drawn from these records, which were undoubtedly inflated by the effects of a long war. This was the first year when war restrictions were lifted, and it was only to be expected that the Middle East, long starved of all but the essential minimum of imports and with its capital replacement goods necessarily sacrificed to the more urgent calls on shipping space for immediate consumption commodities, should take all she can buy and carry. Nevertheless, when this proviso is made it is clear that Britain is straining every nerve to capture the Arab markets and succeeding. When one compares, for example, the Iraq figures with those of 1938, one finds a jump in imports for Britain from £1,516,714 to £7,522,399, while the Palestine 1938 figures also show a great rise from £1,150,653 to £12,283,786.

The import of capital goods has also increased abnormally but out of her total of three and a half million pounds, Syria and the Lebanon spent £,388,494 on locomotives, ships and aircraft. Iraq imported nearly three million pounds worth of iron and steel products and machinery during four months of the recorded period in 1946 out of a total trade for the nine months of some seven and a half million pounds. That industrialisation is rapidly progressing in the Middle East can be judged by the fact that in 1946 Syria found fifteen new companies for the production of such consumer goods as soap and glass with a total capital of 50,000,000 liras. Other countries too are making endeavour to make themselves industrially self-sufficient. King Ibn Saud told a 'New York Time's correspondent that he planned to spend the ten-million dollar loan, recently received from the U.S.A. Export-Import Bank and the accruing oil royalties "on projects to develop our country in all ways, on railways, harbour, ports, agriculture public health, education and anything that can serve to raise, the living standards of our subjects, morally materially, and assure their happiness now or in later years." That the Great Powers find a ready market for capital goods in this region, which is preparing for industrialisation, is therefore no wonder.

### **. Construction of Railways**

The construction of railways in the Middle East provided another reason to foreign powers to establish their foothold. Towards the end of the nineteenth century various Governments began to take over interest in the direction of the railway lines. The German bank brought up Pressel's railway and obtained permission to carry

on as far as Baghdad. This was not the only railway concession in the Turkish empire, the English had their lines in the Mediterranean region inland from Smyrna. The French wished to build Syria's railways. And while until the beginning of the twentieth century, French and German interests ran peacefully side by side and at times were even capable of concurrent operation everything was changed by the Anglo-French Agreement of 1903. The English and French now worked together in order to counteract Germany's 'eastward drive'. The French refused to allow a branch line of the Baghdad Railway to be built to Alexandretta, for they looked upon this as their private Syrian domain. The English would not permit Kuwait, at the head of Persian Gulf, to become the terminus of the line. Compromises were made, and the building of the railway was interrupted by the outbreak of the first World War. The construction of railways was however resumed soon afterwards. The Russians ran the railway from the north to Iranian Azerbaijan, which was completed as far as Tabriz in 1916. The English line advanced towards Iranian Seistan through Baluchistan. The French spread a network of railways in Syria, connecting Aleppo, Hama and Homs in the north with Tripoli, Haifa, Jerusalem, Beirut and Damascus. The Germans also constructed the enormous stretch of a Baghdad railway from Haider Pasha across Asia Minor as far as the gates of Cilicia as well as section of line between Adana and Alexandretta and in Iraq. During the second world war the railways have been extended further. Though the German and Russian control over railways has almost vanished, Great Britain and France command many railways and earn their profits to the detriment of the Muslim countries.

## Oil Imperialism

/ 'If you dig deep in the Near Eastern politics you find oil'-thus goes a saying. / No single factor except the geographical position has been so largely responsible in stimulating the rivalry of the Great Powers regarding the Middle East than this liquid element. One of the most important military as well as civil requisites of today is oil, and this region contains one of the world's greatest and relatively untapped sources of supply. If continued domination of the empires and markets are to be ensured, the Western Powers rightly think that they must not only control the oil output of the area, but also must be able to enforce and perpetuate that control by military strength. /

The history of oil imperialism in this region begins from the year 1901 when an enterprising Australian, William Knox D'Arcy, obtained from the Shah of Iran a 60-year monopoly for oil exploitation in all Iran except the northern provinces bordering on the Caspian Sea. D'Arcy then went to London and organised the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, originally a private concern. But shortly before the first World War, the Bank of England bought 56 per cent of the shares of the Company, thus giving the British Government control of what has already proved to be the very rich oil-fields near the head of the Persian Gulf. The importance of the Iranian oil increased when Mr. Winston Churchill, as first Lord of the Admiralty, took the momentous step of equipping Britain's newest and most powerful warships as oil-burners instead of coal-burners. The decision to use oil instead of coal was quickly extended from warships to merchantships, tankers and even tramp ships, because oil is much more economical and



convenient. During World War I gasoline for petroleum was also increasingly used in the new engines of modern warfare, airplanes and tanks and other motorized equipment. Pertinently remarked Lord Curzon that the "Allies floated to victory on a sea of oil". Thus Iran's oil became the most eagerly sought for prize of diplomacy. Since then this precious wealth of Iran is owned and exported by foreigners, from whose prosperity a few crumbs of economic benefit fall to Iran's share in the form of taxes and expanding commerce and increasing business.

After World War I, the American companies put up a determined fight to gain access to the oil resources of this region. But it was only after energetic governmental interference in 1927 that rapid penetration into the Middle East oil industry of American capital began. In a comparatively short period American oil companies received numerous oil concessions in many Muslim States. Even in Iran by an Agreement concluded with Britain in December, 1946, America has secured some shares. But oil production and refining are still exclusively controlled by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, in which the British Government owns a 56 per cent interest. Almost all of the oil mined in Iran is refined at this company's plants in Abadan. The Anglo-Iranian Company has its own railways in Iran, a merchant fleet, an air-fleet and even a police force of its own.

The Soviet Union too is trying to regain certain concessions in Iran, which Russia enjoyed during the Czarist regime. It will be recalled that during the first years of the Bolshevik rule, British forces invaded Russian Azerbaijan and reached

the rich Baku oil-fields. In 1921, therefore, Russia still surrounded by hostile capitalist enemies, made a treaty with Iran. By this treaty, Russia abandoned concessions in Iran which had been made to the former Czarist regime, and in return Iran agreed that she would never grant oil concessions in North Iran, and that Russian troops might enter Iran if the Soviet Union should ever be threatened with attack. On several occasions between 1921 and 1942 American and British firms got promises of concessions in North Iran, but in each case the Soviet Union was able to put enough pressure on Iran to secure their annulment. During 1944 Russian, British and American interests had all tried to get oil concessions in North Iran. When told that Iranian law forbade the granting of concessions, while foreign troops were in the country, the British and American concession-hunters withdrew their requests. But the Russians continued to demand them and hoped to exert pressure or secure them by keeping their troops in Iran until their demands were met. On April 6, 1946 a few days after Russia informed the Council that her troops would be withdrawn within six weeks, announcement was made that a Russo-Iranian oil agreement had been reached. Russia's military pressure had been successful. The agreement provided for a Russo-Iranian Oil Company to exploit the huge oil reserves which are believed to lie in the five Northern Provinces of Iran bordering in the Caspian Sea. During the first 25 years Russia was to have 51 per cent and Iran 49 per cent of the shares and of the oil produced during the next 25 years the two countries were to share equally. Iran would furnish the soil and the oil, and Russia the mining and transportation equipment. The Iranian Parliament has however refused to ratify the agreement.

The oil interests of the Western Powers are not only confined to Iran but they extend to almost all Middle Eastern countries where oil is found. One of the most important oil-producing countries in this region is Iraq, which occupies a key position as the hub of international communications. According to the report of the Truman's Committee, known oil deposits in Iraq amounted to approximately 4,000,000,000 barrels in 1943. The country's oil production is controlled by Iraq Petroleum, British Oil Development, Khanaqin Oil and Basra Petroleum. Of these, Iraq Petroleum is the most important. After a protracted campaign, the shares of the company were distributed among various groups as follows, the Anglo-Iran group, the Royal Dutch Shell group, the French Group and the American Group each 23 $\frac{1}{4}$  per cent and Mr. C. S. Gulbenkian, 5 per cent.

Concessionary rights over the whole of the easterly part of Ibn Saud's territory is held by the Arabian American Oil Company, jointly owned by the Standard Oil Company of California and the Texas Corporation. According to the "Oil and Gas Journal", the two American Companies control in Saudi Arabia a territory totalling some 611,000 square miles, which is approximately one-fifth of the territory of the United States. Early in 1944 it was officially announced that the Petroleum Reserves Corporation had decided to build a big Trans-Arabian pipe-line, with a capacity of 250,000 barrels of oil a day. The pipe-line was to extend from the Persian Gulf to the South Eastern Coast of the Mediterranean, passing through the oilfields controlled by the Standard Oil Company of California, Texas Oil and the Gulf Oil Corporation. This project was the cause of some uneasiness among interested circles in Britain, who felt that it might threaten their

domination in the Middle East, especially in view of the fact that the comparatively low capacity (84,000 barrels a day) of the two pipe-lines in operation in Iraq restricts oil production in that country.

The Bahrein Islands in the Persian Gulf are other important oil producing areas. Oil production here is in the hands of the Bahrein Petroleum Company, a subsidiary of two big American firms—Texas Oil and Standard Oil of California. The original concession on Bahrein Islands was owned by a British Company and it was only after energetic intervention on the part of the U.S. Government that it was transferred to American interests. Industrial exploitation of the Bahrein oil fields began only in 1932.

Of similarly recent date is the industrial exploitation of the oil-fields of Kuwait on the northern coast of the Persian Gulf. Here, too, there was a clash between American and British interests. Known oil deposits in Kuwait are quite considerable, and here, as on the Bahrein Islands, the British Government did everything in its power to prevent the grant of a concession to any but British concerns. During the negotiations, between the U.S. and British governments, the Anglo-Iranian Company, previously quite indifferent to Kuwait oil resources, evinced a sudden interest in the question.

Concession in Qatar, Trucial Coast, Muscat, Oman and Aden are held by the Petroleum Concessions Ltd. In Qatar an oil-field was discovered and was at an early stage of exploratory drilling during the early war years but work was later suspended for the duration. In Syria, the Syria Con-

cessions, Ltd., has already completed a number of deep borings but without result. Some smaller French companies have also been interested in concessions in Syria. In Palestine, exploration for oil has extended over many years, but the prospects have always been on the border line of attractiveness. Concessions held by the Palestine Development Company, a company of similar composition to the Iraq Petroleum Company, are mostly held by the Palestine Potash Syndicate. Oil-production and refining in Egypt, are controlled by the Anglo-Egyptian Oilfields, a subsidiary of the Royal Dutch Shell and the Anglo-Iranian Company. But the Americans are no less interested in Egyptian oil, and concessions in Egypt have been acquired by the Standard Oil Company of California jointly with the Texas Oil Company. Between 1938 and 1944 oil output and refining in Egypt was more than doubled.

### **Poverty of Masses.**

While the foreigners are thriving at the expense of the people of the Middle East, the children of the soil are groaning under the yoke of poverty. The agrarian system is hopelessly out-of-date and rotten. In almost all these States the land belongs to the land proprietors, whereas the tenant till the plot assigned to him by a traditional lease management. The holdings are very small in irrigated areas where the amount of labour needed is high and the family's working capacity is taxed to the utmost, while the average size tends to increase with the need for extensive farming. The most conspicuous features of this system is the low share apportioned to the tenant. The unsatisfactory state of dependence of tenant upon landlord, who lacking interest in the

actual work in the land, may evict him without notice, is aggravated by the fact that the landlord supplies the tenant with credit to cover the money needs of his farming as a rule at the exaggerated rate of interest. "The income of the Iraqi Fellah," says A. Bonne, "is extremely low since he must share his meagre harvest among many". After paying numerous taxes the Fellah retains for himself and his family from £6 to £10 annually. "A large proportion of the emigration of the state for Syria," writes B. Himadeh in "Economic Organisation of Syria", "may be traced to the inability of the Syrian peasantry to gain an adequate living in agricultural pursuits either as labourers or as proprietors". This unhappy situation is not exclusive to the Syrian peasant, but is observed in certain parts of the Lebanon. "Similarly the Fellah in Palestine," says Afif J. Tannous, "has always been, until recently the subject of oppression, neglect and ill-treatment of his own countrymen and the political regime". Even in Modern Turkey, where industrialisation is progressing remarkably, agricultural conditions have failed to keep pace with the general development of the country. In Egypt, the condition of the peasantry, ably depicted by Amine Youssef Bey in "Independent Egypt" is most deplorable. The vast majority of the Egyptians are illiterate 'Fellahin' with an average yearly income of £10 living in filthy mud hovels and beset on the average by two or three debilitating diseases. Elevated in the economic stratosphere far above the sprawling millions are a handful of opulent Pashas. Even the Wafdist party, the mass nationalist movement, is led by the landlords and the industrialists, who are willing to go along on a strong anti-British line but make small concessions to the impoverished Fellahin and city workers and quite naturally resist

social reforms which will seriously undermine their own economic position.

Equally bad are the conditions of the industrial labour. The end of the War has further aggravated the economic misery and there are about 600,000 unemployed in Egypt. The foreign industrial establishments and concessions have thwarted all workers' attempts to secure betterment of their lot. For example, most of the industrial establishments in the Lebanon are owned by foreign capitalists, — French and British, Belgian and American. The banks, railways and tobacco industry are almost exclusively French-owned, the Beirut tramways and power station are the property of French and Belgian capital. Similar is the case in other Muslim countries. The fortunes of most Egyptian industrialists are built in collaboration with British capital. It is therefore quite natural that the labour movement followed by Communism is on the march. It derives its main impetus from the enthusiasm and idealism of the young intellectuals and its chief strength in numbers is among industrial workers. The trade unions of the Middle Eastern countries are gaining growing organizational strength and doing more and more to defend the interest of the working people and to rally and educate them. During the last few days the trade union movement has made great progress in Syria and the Lebanon. "Communism, I understand on the highest authority" wrote the 'Hindustan Times' Cairo correspondent in March, 1946, "has made great strides in Syria for what it may be worth I quote this Syrian-Christian source as saying: 'The British were fools to urge the withdrawal of French troops from Syria' and my stay in Baghdad brought me up against plenty"

of evidence of its growing strength in Iraq". Though the leftist movement in other countries is still puny but what makes it important is the possibility that turbulent postwar conditions might mass an army of discontented behind them.

It is likely to increase further due to the moral and material support of U.S.S.R. The Soviet Union feels that such a democratic movement will eliminate all vestiges of British and American capitalism from the Middle East and might also pave the way for Communism. In Teheran it is said that the Tudeh party received Russian subsidies to carry on its extensive propaganda. Russian newsprint at very low cost was supplied for Tudeh's half a dozen newspapers and magazines and for its voluminous output of propaganda books and pamphlets. The main organ of the party 'Rahbar' and the organ of the trade unions 'Zafar' were if not Communist, at least very enthusiastic fellow-travellers.

The leftist movement, backed by Russia, has frightened the opulent classes in the Middle East. "What gives them nightmares in technicolour", says Andrew Roth, "is the possibility that the small left minority may succeed in harnessing together the social and nationalist movements with the aim not only of driving out British influence but also of instituting agrarian labour and other reforms. Feeling too weak to cope with the increasing labour agitation and general social discontent, the reactionary class in these countries looks to Britain to shield them".

### **Power-Politics.**

"The behaviour of nations", says Walter Lipmann, "over a long period of time is the most reliable, though



not the only index of their national interest. For though their interests are not eternal, they are remarkably persistent. We can most surely judge what a nation will probably want by seeing what over a fairly long period of time it has wanted. We can most surely predict what it will do by knowing what it has usually done". To understand how the foreign powers will behave towards the Middle East in future, it is necessary that we should examine their attitude in the past. Needless (it is to emphasise that the searches for sources of raw materials, markets of vast extent and strategic positions commanding routes to them, induced the Great Powers to make this region the object of imperial projects.) The story is rightly said to be a game of the giants, with countries for squares.

France was the first to enter the arena. Even during the Crusades she played such a leading role that the Turks commonly spoke of all Western Europeans as 'Franks'. In the sixteenth century France again acquired much influence by her policy of alliance with the Turks in order to have them as a friend on the other side of Germany. But as a result of her defeats or exhaustions in the wars of 1792-1815 and 1870-1, the French prestige was a bit undermined. Nevertheless, it was estimated in 1903 that French investors controlled three-fifths of the public obligation of the Imperial Ottoman Treasury.

Britain followed France in the Middle East. Beginning in 1618, the British, through the action of their East India Company, defeated the Portuguese in the struggle for the pearl fisheries of Ormuz and the trade of Persian Gulf. The British established themselves at Ormuz and Bandar

Abbas near the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and gradually acquired the dominating influence in south Iran which they have kept ever since. The creation and safeguarding of a land connection was thus the primary object of her policy. A weak Turkey on the route to India mattered little to Britain but what she desired most was the elimination of any other European power from this area. To keep alive the 'sick man' but not to allow her to get well was Britain's guiding principle in the nineteenth century. For similar reasons Britain was interested in the preservation of Iraq and Afghanistan to serve as buffer states between India and Russia but she did not desire any increase in their strength.

Russia was the last to jump into the fray, when Peter the Great gave her impetus to expand herself to Black and Caspian Seas and beyond them to the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. Peter looked for water outlets for his hitherto landlocked empire. He succeeded in getting temporary foothold on the Black Sea by securing Azov from Turkey and on the shore of the Caspian Sea by snatching Astrakhan, Resht and Baku from Iran. Catherine, the Great, further contributed to Imperial expansion, annexed whole north shore of the Black Sea and hoped to rule one day over Constantinople and to have military control over the straits of the Bosphorous. The Dardanelles was ever afterwards one of the most ambitious and persistent aims of Russian imperialism. More annexations were made at the expense of Iran. The Caucasus Mountains, running between the Black and Caspian Seas, with peaks rising to 16,000 feet and almost impassable in the absence of good roads or

passes, was the natural boundary between Europe and the Middle East. Possession of Georgia in 1801 brought Russia into wars with Iran, in which Iran, in spite of some diplomatic help from Britain was always defeated. By the treaty of Gulistan in 1813, the Shah was forced to recognise Russia's annexation of Georgia, Daghestan, Mingralia, Abkhasia and other mountain tribes south of the Caucasus, and grant the Russians free navigation of the Caspian Sea. Fifteen years later, after another war, by the Treaty of Turcomanchai in 1828, Russia took another great slice of Iranian territory by annexing most of Armenia and extending her boundary southward to the Araxes River which (except for its lower course) still forms today the boundary between the Soviet Federated Republic of Azerbaijan and the Iranian province of Azerbaijan. By this treaty of 1828 Russia got a hold on Iran's internal affairs by the right to establish Russian consulates anywhere in Iran, and to export goods to Iran with a minimum tariff charge of only five per cent. Slowly but surely the Russians pressed on. In sixties and seventies they conquered, one after another, the petty principalities or Khanates of Turkestan. They began to encroach on the Northern borders of Iran and Afghanistan.

Britain, however, did not allow these annexations to go unchecked. Every time they tried their level best to counteract Russian designs. In 1878-81 the British statesmen became increasingly nervous especially about Afghanistan and the Russo-phobia led them to repeat another aggressive war on Afghanistan. Meanwhile Britain succeeded in thwarting the Russian designs to dismember the decaying Ottoman Empire at the Berlin Congress of 1878. Disraeli's

Cyprus Convention with the Sultan, pledging England to support the Turkish empire, checked Russian encroachment, though Russia was permitted to appropriate Bessarabia and the Armenian districts of Aradhan and Batum, while 'Austria-Hungary occupied the Turkish provinces of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Sanjak of Novi-Baza and Great Britain occupied Cyprus, and France was secretly encouraged by England and Germany to console herself in Tunis, then a tributary province of the Sultans. Moreover, the Balkan nations of Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro were given full independence, part of Bulgaria received autonomy, and Serbia, Montenegro and Greece extended their frontiers at Turkey's expense. Yet considered as a whole, the settlement of 1878 was an English veto on Russia's plan of partition, as the British Foreign Minister Lord Salisbury wrote, three months later, "The reluctance of England to enter on a full policy of partition...is now the solitary support on which the Sultan's empire now rests".

A fresh crisis between England and Russia arose in the year 1884-85 when Russia moved into the town of Merv, and then marched south to Panjdeh in North-western Afghanistan. Queen Victoria appealed to the Czar to restrain such dangerous aggression, and a British army was prepared to oppose the Russian advance. Gladstone was, however, unwilling to fight and allowed the Russians to keep their gains. Again war threatened in 1895, when the Russians moved up into the high Pamir Plateau in the north-east of Afghanistan, where only a thin strip of Afghan territory separated them from India. With the dawn of the twentieth century the conflict grew keener. While England

was occupied in the Boer War in South Africa, Russia stealthily resumed her progress in Iran, Afghanistan and in Tibet. In Iran the Russian Bank made another loan to the Shah, and a Russian warship attempted to establish a depot on the Persian Gulf at Bandar Abbas. British statesmen were acutely alive to the situation. The British Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon wrote to London in 1899, "Closely pressing upon Iran and Afghanistan is the ever-growing momentum of a Power whose interest in Asia are not always in accord with our own. The advance of Russia across the deserts that form the natural barrier between West and East Iran could not be regarded without uneasiness by the Government of India".

When matters seemed to be coming to a head, the unexpected happened. Russia and Great Britain concluded a pact in 1907. Various reasons are attributed for the conclusion of this Pact. It is stated that when two nations meet as rivals only at one point, compromise is difficult but where they are rivals in many regions, it is easy to bargain. That Russia and England chose to bargain rather than to fight was due partly to these circumstances. The most significant factor was probably the joint hostility to Germany. The Anglo-Russian convention of 1907 embraced three agreements, one on Iran, the second on Afghanistan and the third on Tibet. Russia recognised Afghanistan as "outside the sphere of Russian influence" and promised to deal with its ruler only through the British Government. Britain, on the other hand, pledged not to annex or occupy Afghanistan as long as the Amir fulfilled his treaty obligations, that is, remained in British pay, friendly towards Britain and obedient to her wishes in foreign policy. As regards Iran, though her sovereignty

was recognised, it was to be divided into three zones. In the Northern zone, Great Britain would neither seek concessions for herself nor oppose concessions demanded by Russian zone. In the British zone, Britain was to have the concessions. The agreement really meant an Anglo-Russian monopoly of concessions and control in Iraq.

No sooner had this arrangement been made than it was disturbed by the German diplomacy. The ambitious young Kaiser believed ardently in the imperialist creed, and was eager to gain what he could for Germans. As early as 1889 William visited Constantinople and repeated his visit in October, 1898. On this occasion Kaiser declared, "May His Majesty the Sultan and may the 300 million Mohammedans who, living scattered about the earth, venerate him as their Caliph, be assured that at all time the German Emperor will be their friend". The material results of the Kaiser's visit became apparent. "As economic results achieved by the Kaiser's trip", wrote the German Foreign Minister Von Bulow, "we may regard the allotment of a concession for the construction of a harbour in Haidar Pasha, the concession for a German cable between Constanza and Constantinople, the strengthening of the existing relations between the Turkish Government and great German firms. Through the cable concession we arrive in possession of a direct telegraphic connection with Constantinople, which will serve as the beginning of a new world line. Here we should also note the plan for a continuation of the Anatolian railways to Baghdad, whereby, we may hope, the foundation will be laid for the further economic opening of Asia Minor". The mere reference of Berlin-Baghdad railway caused a consternation

in Great Britain, France and Russia. Between Russian aims and German railway, there was an absolute clash. The German railway, the Russians thought, would revive the sick man, strengthen his grip on Constantinople and on Armenia, both of which had long been coveted by Russians. Thus the business proposition of building a railway became a matter of imperialist diplomacy and international enmity. The German imperialists fully knew the importance of the railway. The Great German Sprenger wrote, "There are no virgin forests to clear away, no natural difficulties to overcome, but you have only to scratch the soil, sow and reap. The Near-East is the only region in the world not yet appropriated by a Great Power. Nevertheless, it is the finest field for colonisation. If Germany does not lose the opportunity, but seizes it before the Cossacks stretch out their hand in that direction, she will have acquired the best share in the partition of the world". German financiers, as a matter of fact hoped to tap the trade of Iran through the Baghdad-Khaniqin branch of the Baghdad railway, and the German Foreign Office was their champion. Nevertheless, the latter was not eager to offend the Czar's government too deeply.

Even before Russia and England came together in 1907, Germany and Russia had been bargaining. If Russia would cease opposing the Baghdad Railway, Germany might recognise Russian interests in Iran. After the Anglo-Russian bargain, Russia's attitude was for a time stiffened. Germany, accordingly, asked for equal commercial rights and a share in supplying materials for railway in Iran, although she was willing to recognise that Russia and England had a privileged position there. At length, however, a compromise between

Russia and Germany was reached in the Potsdam Agreement, signed on August 19, 1911. (1) Germany recognised the Russian sphere of interest in Northern Iran, and undertook not to seek concessions for railways, roads, telegraphs, or their means of communications in that region. (2) Germany agreed that Russia should obtain from Iran the concession for a railway from Teheran to Khaniqin on the Iranian frontier, which place was to be linked up to the Baghdad railway. (3) In return Russia promised to abandon her opposition to the Baghdad railway. Later on France and England also came to terms on the Baghdad Railway.

The Balkan crisis this time upset the whole arrangement. In 1912 four of the Balkan nations—Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and Montenegro—attacked Turkey. The political observers rightly suspected that Russian diplomacy had secretly encouraged Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece to ally themselves to drive Turkey out of Macedonia. The Second Balkan war made confusion worse confounded. The crime committed in the dusty streets of Sarajevo set fire to the embers that had been kindled long before.

### **The Interregnum (1914–1939).**

Turkey was brought to the war on Germany's side by the efforts of Young Turks like Enver Pasha, who felt that Russian victory would mean an end of Turkey. The Allies, however, by subterfuge did not fail to encourage the insurgent forces within the Turkish empire. The tempting offers made by the British diplomats were accepted by Sherif Hussein of Hejaz. The revolt of a certain section of the Arabs expedited the liquidation of Turkish suzerainty. Even Indian troops



were dragged to fight against the Turks much to their distaste.

But Germany was defeated as all the world knows, and it was left to the Allies to divide the spoils of Turkey. The promissory generosity of the Allies towards each other was however never realised. Russia by becoming Bolshevik forfeited her claims. The Peace Treaty of Sevres, which the Allies compelled the Turkish Government to sign on August 10, 1920, was by no means wholly thwarted. All claims which the former Turkish empire might have had to Egypt, Cyprus, Tripoli and Cyrenaica and Tunis were finally cancelled in favour of the imperialist powers occupying those former Turkish provinces. Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Arabia and the Dodecanese were definitely severed from Turkey and appropriated by European powers. The mandate for Syria was assigned to France, the mandates for Iraq and for Palestine and Transjordan to Britain. The remaining Arab provinces of the Turkish empire secured their independence. The coastal strip of Arabia bordering on the Red Sea became the independent kingdom of Hejaz.

After the first world war the situation in the Middle East was greatly changed. The old Turkish empire, allied with Germany and ruling over non-Turkish people in widely scattered regions, completely disappeared. The new Turkey of Kemal Ataturuk was geographically much smaller, but actually far stronger, because it was now reformed, re-organised and inspired with patriotic nationalism. Iran remained territorially intact but was still continuously weak and torn by internal factions and domestic revolutions.

Among the powers, Germany was completely eliminated, and France almost so, except for her mandate over Syria and the Lebanon

The policy of Bolshevik Russia was, however much at variance with the policy pursued by the Czarist regime towards the Middle East. In a report submitted in December 1919 by the People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs to the Seventh Congress of Soviets of all the Russias it was stated, 'We addressed the Government of North and South China, the Mongolian Government, the Persian Government and the revolutionary organization of Korea, stating our concrete programme and giving up the entire legacy of the Czarist regime and its continuation by the Kerensky Government. We solemnly announced to the Turkish and the Muslim race in its fight for its lost liberties'. The report concluded, "To whatever Eastern country we turn our eyes, whether China, Turkey or Egypt, we observe a deep fermentation which is assuming more and more the concrete form of a movement against European and American capitalism. This movement has for its ultimate object the attainment of our ideals". The Soviet friendship with Muslim countries was strengthened in many ways. After the third Anglo-Afghan war, an Afghan Mission was received in Moscow and Soviet representatives proceeded to Kabul. The Anglo-Afghan relations were further regulated by the Treaty of November 22, 1921, by which an interchange of diplomatic representatives was arranged. These relations were confirmed by the Treaty of August 31, 1926. In Iran also the Soviet influence grew steadily through the winter and spring of 1920-21, and on February 26, 1921, the new Cabinet of Zia-ud-din annulled

the Anglo-Iranian agreement and at the same time signed the Soviet-Iranian Agreement. All treaties imposed on Iran or concluded with other powers to the detriment of Iran were declared null and void. No internal interference was permitted but it was provided that if any power used Iran as a base for attack, Soviet troops might enter Iran solely to prevent that danger.

The Russian attitude towards Turkey was also revised. In June, 1920 a Russian Note was sent from Chicherin, to the new Government set up at Angora under Kemal Atatürk unrecognised by the Allies, congratulating it on its accession to power and asking for consular and diplomatic relations. On March 16, 1921 a Russo-Turkish Treaty was signed, and the community of interest felt between the two powers, both unrecognised by Western Europe, was evidenced in the first paragraph running as follows, "The Government of the Russian Socialist Republic, Federal Soviet Republic and the Government of the Great National Assembly of Turkey adhering to the principles of brotherly relations between nations and self determination of peoples, and recognising the solidarity existing between them in the struggle against imperialism as well as the fact that difficulties of any kind affecting any of the two countries will endanger also the situation of the other, being fully and wholly animated by the desire to bring about friendly relations and unswervingly upright friendship based on mutual interest of the two parties, have decided to conclude a treaty of amity and brotherhood between them". This treaty was followed in the autumn of 1921, by a conference of Turkey, Soviet Russia and the three Caucasian Republics at Kars, at which a treaty was signed regulating all

contentious questions. After the signing of these treaties, a treaty of Mutual Non-Agression was concluded at Paris between the Soviet Union and the Turkish Republic, to run for a period of at least three years.

More friendly were the relations of Russia with Saudi Arabia. The Soviet Government could not ignore that Arabia was an outpost from which the British imperialist policy could be observed. Moscow further wished the Arabs to see a friend and moral supporter in the Soviet Union, and because the Bolsheviks, despite their atheistic beliefs, could not ignore the spiritual bond that connected their millions of Muslim citizens with the Holy places of Islam. When in February, 1926, Ibn Saud assumed the titles of the King of Hejaz and Sultan of Nejd, Moscow recognised him in these titles, for which the new monarch is reported to have written a warm letter of thanks. In July 1926, Ibn Saud convened an All-Muslim Congress in Mecca while his opponents prepared to summon a similar meeting in Cairo. The Bolsheviks allowed the Chief Ecclesiastical Directorate of the Islamic Church in Russia to send a strong delegation to Mecca Assembly, and this contributed appreciably to the reinforcement of Ibn Saud's position in the Muslim world. Though relatively of minor importance, Moscow sought in this way to remind the Arabs of the existence of a big anti-imperialist power. The reciprocal friendship of the Muslim countries towards the Soviet Union can be judged by the fact that when the British and French political hostility towards the Soviet Union was highly pronounced, official Iranian, Afghan and Turkish delegations went to Moscow to attend the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution in November 1927.

The cordial Soviet relations with Muslim countries did not preclude moments of friction and bad feeling, quarrels and annoying incidents occasionally marred the relations. The establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty on December 12, 1925 and the subsequent coronation of Raza Shah did not affect the relations favourably. His monarchical ceremony and alleged fondness of the reactionary group did not much please the Russians. The grant of an oil concession to Britain made matters worse. The Russians since then are levelling the allegations that the Iranians did not live up to the terms of the Treaty of 1921. The Lausanne Convention caused also disagreement between Moscow and Ankara. The Russians wanted that Turkey having gained her sovereignty with their help, should close the Straits to all battle-ships, excepting those of adjoining States. At the Lausanne, Turkey gave in to the British request to grant free passage to all battle-ships in peace time and to all neutral war and merchant ships in times of war. The gulf widened between Turkey and Soviet Russia when Turkey got their way at Montreaux and were permitted to fortify the Dardanelles.

Britain, after the first world war, was left in the same dominant position in the Middle East. She was naturally anxious to preserve the advantages she had acquired in the preceding imperialist age, her strategic life-line, her oil concessions and so forth. Being a great consumer of oil and having very few oil reserves within the British Empire, she was eager to acquire new oil supplies in the Middle East and shut out the efforts of the others including the Americans. In Afghanistan, Britain was confronted with a war in 1921 and had ultimately to yield control in guiding the foreign policy of that country. Nevertheless, Britain shortly afterwards

reasserted her prestige by diplomatic manouvering. During this period the Britishers were not so much afraid of Russia as an imperialist power marching into India but as a propagandist of Communist ideas more menacing than the Cossack legions. Britain wanted Afghanistan and Iran to serve as non-conductor of the revolutionary ideas, hatched in the Soviet East. But to British disgust, Afghanistan of Amanullah proved to be a fine copper wire. Hence the British diplomacy left no stone unturned in short circuiting the contact by fomenting an insurrection which led to the overthrow of Amanullah regime. Since then Britain has found in the present ruling class a good ally with no great leanings towards any side.

In Iran the influence of the British Government's Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in the South continued to be strong. Influence continued to be exercised on the Sheikhs of the South. Britain supported Iraq's claims to the Mosul oilfields which were also claimed by Turkey, and as a reward got a practical controlling interest in their exploitation. The British agents continued to employ recalcitrant tribes in all these countries as a means of applying pressure on constitutional Governments. The Moscow 'Izvestia' of October 6, 1927 definitely charged that British gold was responsible for Kurd raids from Turkey into Iran. Britain could not secure the Turkish friendship in the beginning. Turkey had a deep distrust of Britain and held her responsible for all her miseries. But gradually Turkey in search for security against the encroachment of the 'living spaces' of predatory great powers, sought British cooperation. It culminated into the signing of the Anglo-Turkish Mutual Assistance Pact on May 12, 1939.

Britain had to wage an unceasing struggle in Egypt, Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq to maintain her hegemony. The nationalist movement after the first world war had gained considerable momentum. Britain was forced to conclude several treaties with each of these countries in order to pacify the extremist element. By clever manouverings, by encouraging internal dissensions and by deliberate evasions, Britain conceded freedom to these people in instalments. She concluded a treaty with Egypt in 1922 and the other in 1936. The first recognised the sovereignty of Egypt and the other made certain vital concessions. Similarly various commissions were appointed to meet the conflicting demands of the Jews and Arabs. Treaties were also concluded with Iraq and Transjordan on the model of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936.

The French influence in the Middle East was confined to Syria and the Lebanon. They however proved to be the worst colonial rulers in this region. It was after great hesitation that France, following the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty concluded analogous treaties with Syria and the Lebanon.

Great interest was also displayed by Italy in the Middle East during this period. Her policy is said to have been aimed at strengthening Italian influence throughout the Arab world in general and in Yemen in particular. In 1926 when Yemen was engaged in a prolonged dispute with Britain, Italy and Yemen concluded a treaty of commerce and amity. After Mussolini's acceptance of the "Sword of Islam" near Tripoli in March 1937, the Imam sent him a message approving his policy towards Islam. Marshal Balbo, Governor of Libya also announced that "the Duce is the Protector of

Islam, and as such he exalts the Muslim people". Italy took every advantage of the difficulties encountered by France in order to weaken the position of the two Mandatory powers. Italy also made use of most diverse means of propaganda. It established in Rome academies and journals for the study of Islamic affairs. The other means resorted to for establishing friendly relations were wireless broadcasts, the cinema, the establishment of Italian schools and hospital and cultural centres, scholarships and free visits to Italy for Arab students, the appointment of Italian priests to influential posts, subsidies to Arab organisations and newspapers, and even promises of support to rebels against the British and other foreign regimes. "The voice of Bari" (Italian Broadcasting Station), wrote John Gunther in 1939, "is heard these days from the bazars of Cairo to Baghdad's eight-mile long 'main street, from the Ochre lava-land of Transjordan to the swamps of the Euphrates. Arabs listen in groups and clusters. In the villages, even in the oases of the deserts, the local Sheikh may have a radio conveniently donated by Italian agents and the tribesmen flock around to listen". This greatly alarmed Britain. The Anglo-Italian agreement finally put through by Mr. Chamberlain in 1938 laid down "that any attempt of either of them to employ the methods of publicity or propaganda at its disposal in order to injure the interests of the other would be inconsistent with the good relations which it is the object of the present Agreement to establish and maintain".

The Italian activities in the Middle East were supplemented by equally forceful propaganda of Germany which enjoyed an excellent position in this region. Her help in modernising the civil administrations, improving communica-



tions, reorganising armies, and creating new industries was sought and appreciated. German aeroplanes opened up wide stretches of fertile land to trade with the rest of the world. German engineers planned and built the new capitals of Ankara, Teheran and Kabul. Herr Hitler's name, above all, fascinated the minds of a large section of the people.

When the war broke out in 1939 both the Allies and the Axis began to drag the Muslim countries on their respective sides. The Muslim statesmen knew well that participation in the war was not likely to benefit them but they were also alive to the fact that the maintenance of the integrity and independence of their states was not possible in isolation. They felt that the Allies might save them from the hands of the Fascist hordes who would treat their lands as colonies and themselves as slaves. They also had a deep distrust of the Allies and feared that junior partnership with the Allies might perpetuate foreign hegemony. Placed in an awkward situation, the Middle Eastern countries in general affirmed neutrality in the war and began to watch the international events with great anxiety. In the beginning some Muslim states appeared more pro-Axis than pro-Allies. The reason is obvious. The whole world believed that Germany would win. But subsequently the confidence of the Muslim states increased. Turkey took a lead in this matter. She cancelled contracts with Germany for building ships, munition factories and public works. She dismissed German advisers and instructors, and finally she executed into an alliance her treaties of friendship with the Allied Powers. Egypt was also found standing in the ranks of Allies. The protracted troubles in Palestine disappeared. Ibn Saud, who had a strong dislike to Italy's activities in Yemen, became an ardent

supporter of the Allies. Afghanistan also turned out Axis agents from her territories. Trouble however brewed up in Iraq and Iran which led to the abdication of the Shah of Iran and the flight of Rashid Ali. Since then the conditions in Iran have reached the lowest ebb and rightly remarked Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the President of All India Muslim League at Cairo that Iran "an independent country for centuries" had lost her freedom. Besides Iran and Iraq, Syria and the Lebanon and Egypt also remained under the heels of foreign troops. Once more the Muslim states were convinced that as they remained weak and divided they would simply remain stooges in the hands of the imperialist powers.

### National Upsurge

It should, however, be borne in mind that the peoples of the Middle East were not the silent spectators of the misdeeds done by foreign powers in this region. On the other hand, they have never meekly submitted to foreign rule and valiantly fought against the injustices perpetrated on them.

¶The peoples' resistance movement can be dated back to the nineteenth century. At the outset, nationalism in the Middle East was religious rather than territorial or secular. The driving out of the Europeans, the reconstitution of the Islamic empire of the early Caliphs and the resurrection before the world of the spiritual and moral values of Islam were its first objectives. Jemaluddin-el-Afghani was the leader of this movement popularly known as the Pan-Islamic movement. "Pan-Islamism, that renaissance of the Mohammadan religion and of the religious principles as a

factor", says Hans Kohn, "roused the Mohammedan peoples to self-consciousness, revived their historical traditions, and paved the way for their national and political rebirth". It made very active the sentiment of unity among Muslims in the early twentieth century. Events in one part of the Muslim world rapidly found an echo in far distant parts. The wars in which Turkey became involved called forth demonstrations of sympathy from all Muslim circles. Gifts to Red Crescent came from many lands. Pan-Islamism was also visible in the constitutions of some states. The speech from the throne with which the Turkish Sultan opened Parliament in the year 1909 began with the words: "The Parliamentary Government decreed by the Sharia (Mohammedan) Canonical law...". Article 2 of the Iranian constitution of October 7, 1907, declared, "The Iranian Parliament, established by the will of God, the monarch and the people must preserve harmony with the laws of Islam in all its decisions".

Pan-Islamism also served to smooth the path of liberalism. It stimulated the realisation that reforms were needed in order to give the Muslims the strength to resist Europe. Jemaluddin-el-Afghani also expounded the doctrine that Islam aimed at popular Government in which the ruler's authority rested upon his respect for the law and upon popular consent. The people's movement for liberal reforms took various shapes due to varying conditions in each country. It aimed at striking a blow on the privileged class. In some countries it was chiefly directed against the foreign power but in some countries it only aimed at overthrowing the existing regime. In Egypt the reform movement led by Jemaluddin-el-Afghani allied itself with nationalist movement of the Fellaheen led by Arabi Pasha. Soon after the middle class

intelligentsia, influenced by Europe, became the sole champion of the nationalist movement. During the first world war, the wave of nationalism united the middle class and the Fellah. Since then the Egyptian movement has laid particular stress upon the inseparable tie uniting Egypt and the Sudan, and at the same time upon the necessity of liberation without external aid. The form assumed by Turkish nationalism is more marked than that of any kindred movement in the Middle East. It was not only directed against Western imperialism but also against the Sultan who putting on the garb of religion had become the spearhead of reactionaryism. The Turks had no alternative but to break with Pan-Islamic ideas. The Turkish movement was also controlled by middle class people who had very little sympathy with socialism. Unlike Turkey, the Iranian movement was at a late stage dominated by the privileged classes of the old order who simply aimed at retaining the status quo except for the elimination of foreign controls. Arab nationalism which was wholly religious in the beginning, underwent modification when Turkish and Iranian nationalism disrupted the Pan-Islamic ideal. The Arab nationalists were driven to adopt a Pan-Arab ideal instead. Though broadbased, the Arab nationalism sometime manifests itself as a disruptive and disintegrating force in the form of particularistic nationalism of the Syrian, Iraqi, Lebanese, Palestinian Arabs, Egyptians and even the Saudi Arabites and the Yemenites.

The nationalist movement aiming at liberating the down trodden peoples of this region, has paid a heavy price. None can forget the sacrifices that the nationalists made in Egypt in 1919, in Iraq in 1920, in Syria in 1925, 1936 and 1943-46 and in Palestine in 1929 and 1935-48. The most beneficial result

of the movement is this that most of the Muslim states have secured written constitutions which guarantee fundamental rights of the people. Another significant feature is the prevalence of bi-cameral legislatures with adult male suffrage in all states except Turkey which has unicameral legislature based on universal suffrage.

### **Growing Unity**

Nationalism also paved way for the unity of Muslim states capable of giving a fitting reply to the arrogant imperialism of Russia, Britain and America. And after the first world war even though Turkey abolished the Caliphate her rise to strength and importance made her the focus of Muslims. Later on she became the head, and centre too, of that almost unknown but highly important consortium of Muslim States built up after the Shah of Iran paid his visit to Kemal Ataturk in 1935. On this occasion for the first time the rulers of two outstanding Islamic nations who for centuries had fought each other on religious grounds met and conferred. It is rightly assumed that Ataturk and Reza Shah did not talk of that old feud between Sunnis and Shias but they discussed their interests in common, and the building up of forces that should prevent their countries being held again as pawns by more powerful nations. Soon there followed Turkish officers in Iran selected as instructors in military and aircraft technicalities, and the bond was tightened. The alliance was also widened, for by the good offices of Riza Shah, less than a year later Afghanistan joined Turkey and Iran. A Turkish Military Mission was sent, and Afghanistan received also a number of civil servants to help her in rapidly building up a modernised fighting force and an efficient administration.

Relations between Iran and Iraq had always been somewhat strained over frontier and shipping questions in the Persian Gulf, despite a treaty of friendship signed in 1929. With Turkish help these difficulties were smoothed away. A Treaty of Friendship was also concluded between Saudi Arabia and Turkey on August 3, 1929. Prince Feisal, the second son of King Ibn Saud visited Ankara in 1933.

The Arabs also developed a great sense of fraternity coupled with love for the Afghans, Iranians and Turks. They embodied their aspirations in a Covenant which was formulated by the Arab delegates to the Islamic Congress at Jerusalem in 1931. "The Arab lands," ran the first clause, "are a complete and indivisible whole, and the divisions of whatever nature to which they have been subjected are not approved or recognised by the Arab nation". The second clause said that the Arab countries must aim at the single goal of independence and unification. The third clause repudiated all colonisation of the Arab lands. The sense of Arab fraternity inspired a series of pacts and alliances which Ibn Saud concluded with his neighbours. It began in 1934 with a Saudi-Yemen 'Treaty of Islamic friendship and Arab brotherhood' and was followed in 1936 by a Saudi Iraqi 'treaty of Arab brotherhood and alliance' and a Saudi-Egyptian treaty.

Due to the rivalry of political figures encouraged by foreigners, neither a pact embracing all Muslim States nor an Arab 'entente' materialised. A four-power pact was however signed in 1937 at Saadabad by Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. This pact proved ineffective in practice for the resources at the disposal of Muslim states were not so great

as to resist foreign intervention. Every attempt to do so was thwarted by the diplomatic pressure of the two groups in world politics. Though the pact practically became null and void after the abdication of Reza Shah the spirit that had brought about that union was not crushed down. Turkish press and radio made wild protests when foreign troops entered both in Iran and Iraq.

### **Arab League.**

The strength of Arab opinion was felt when the Allies wanted to mobilise support for the successful prosecution of war. The need of winning Arab good-will became all the more necessary in view of the vigorous anti-British campaign in the Middle East. Taking advantage of the Arabs' anti-Zionist attitude and their desire to free themselves from British overlordship, the Axis had made marked progress with their propaganda. With the fall of France in June, 1940, Syria and the Lebanon fell into Vichy hands and became a pro-Axis spearhead pointed at Britain's chief oil supplies and communication lines in this area. The Axis threat rose still higher in April, 1941 when a pro-Nazi uprising occurred in Iraq under the leadership of Rashid Ali. To buy off Arab opinion in favour of Britain, Mr. Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary in a carefully worded speech declared, "It seems to me both natural and right that cultural and economic ties between the Arab countries, yes, and political ties too should be strengthened. His Majesty's Government for their part will give their support for any scheme that commands general approval". Following Mr. Eden's announcement, Mr. Winston Churchill offered to equip two Iraqi Army divisions then available with any additional reserves that might be enlisted for

the disabling of Vichy forces in Syria and the Lebanon. It is understood that the offer contained a promise to allow the Iraqi Government to dispose of territories taken by right of conquest at its own discretion and placing them under the Iraqi crown. The British proposal enabled the Iraqis to realise the Greater Syria Federation Plan. Naji Pasha Suweidi, the Iraqi Premier, referred the proposal to the five-men Military Council under the Chief of the Staff, Taha Hashimi. The Mufti of Jerusalem, Haji Amin Al-Husseini, then a refugee in Baghdad, is reported to have attended the all-night meeting. After the meeting the Iraqi Premier inquired of Britain what would be the fate of Palestine, and was told that no official promise could be given. After four week's negotiations Iraq rejected the British offer.

The efforts of Britain to establish an Arab organisation slackened when German menace receded from the Middle East. The situation took a turn again in favour of the Arabs when British strategists began to hatch plans for Anglo-American landing in the Balkans with the alleged motive of checking the growing Russian influence into that area. As a second line of defence the British statesmen looked to coalition of Arab states under their own influence. The intention, it is stated, was not only to check infiltration of Communism but also to put a stop to expanding American influence. It will be recalled that after the first world war, American big business was able to get a strong foothold in the Arab states, particularly the oil-bearing Saudi Arabia. The greatly increased American diplomatic and military penetration led to a considerable sharpening of the situation and U.S.A. began to represent more than potential threat to British



supremacy. Thus Britain which had always been industrious in her efforts to keep the Arab States from uniting, now felt that a loose union of Arab States, controlled and dominated by British puppets, would not only help to control the rising nationalist tide but would also serve as a bulwark to Russia and America. And according to some British imperialists it was also a means of eliminating competing French interests in Syria and Lebanon.

In a speech in February 1943 the British Foreign Minister, Mr. Eden reiterated his proposal for an Arab Union. Mr. Eden's renewed proposal was welcomed by Mr. Nuri-el-Said, Iraqi Premier. After a series of conferences and an exchange of confidential letters with Mr. R.C. Casey, British Minister of State in the Middle East, Nuri-el-Said proposed his Greater Syria Plan. This envisaged a federation composed of an 'inner circle' (Syria, the Lebanon, Transjordan and part of Palestine) to be called Greater Syria and another circle (Iraq, Egypt and Saudi Arabia). He proposed as king of Greater Syria Emir Abdullan of Transjordan, who like young King Faisal II of Iraq is a member of the Hashemite dynasty of Sherif Hussein of Hejaz, rival of Ibn Saud. Nuri-el Said's proposal would have insured Hashemite thus British domination of the Arab world. The Iraqi Premier concluding a confidential letter to Mr. Casey is reported to have expressed the hope that his plan would mark the end of "most of the difficulties" Great Britain had faced in the Middle East.

The Greater Syria Plan excited the greatest indignation in certain quarters. The Syrians and the Lebanese who were fighting against the French to achieve independent republics, showed no desire to be engulfed by a 'Greater Syria' Kingdom.

and described it as an imperialist project. King Ibn Saud was violently opposed to any federation dominated by the Hashemite dynasty against which he had been fighting bitterly for over a score of years. And in Egypt King Farouk saw no reason why the Hashemites should have a dominant role when Egypt was the most powerful Arab state with half the population of the proposed federation. The opposition damped the enthusiasm of the proposer and nothing was heard of the plan till the closing months of the year 1946.

On July 24, 1943 Nuri-el-Said, however, opened negotiations with the Iraqi Premier Nahas Pasha at Cairo to explore the possibilities of a federation of the Arab countries. The conversations ended on August 5, 1943 when an announcement was issued stating that an Arab Congress would be called to express their demands. On August 27, 1943 Nahas Pasha announced that he had invited Emir Abdullah, King Ibn Saud, and Imam Yahya of Yemen to send delegates to Cairo to discuss Pan-Arab federation. Tewfiq Pasha, the Prime Minister of Transjordan arrived in Cairo the same day, but King Ibn Saud was reported to have declined to send an envoy and to have communicated his views in a letter to Nahas Pasha. Continuing the Egyptian-Iraqi talks, Kemal Heneicha Bey visited Ibn Saud in September 1943 and it was announced in October 7, 1943 that the King had agreed to send his Foreign Minister to Cairo. Speaking at Riyadh on December 15, 1943, Ibn Saud declared that identity of views had been reached. "It is our duty as Muslims to form a Union" he said. "An Arab Union will unite us. We thank God that a new spirit has appeared among Muslims". Discussions were also held in Cairo with delegates from Syria, led by the Syrian Premier, and the Lebanon headed by the Leba-

nese Prime Minister Ried-es-Solh, a Yemenite representative, and the Sultan of Oman. Communiqués published afterwards stressed the complete unanimity of views on the question of Arab unity. Nuri-el-Said at the same time held conference with Syrian Government representatives in Baghdad and Damascus and subsequently visited Transjordan, Palestine and the Lebanon to discuss the Pan-Arab Scheme. A Syrian delegation went to Riyadh on February 25, to see King Ibn Saud on a similar mission.

On October 7, 1944 a Protocol was signed by the Egyptian, Iraqi, Lebanese, Syrian and Transjordan delegates providing for the establishment of a League of Arab States, upholding Arab rights on Palestine and the British policy of stopping Jewish immigration, and confirming the independence of the Lebanon. The purpose of the League, the Protocol stated, would be "to execute agreements reached between member states, to organise periodical meetings, to reaffirm their relations and to co-ordinate their political programmes, with a view to effecting a separation between them so as to safeguard their independence and sovereignty against any aggression, and to concern itself with the general interests of the Arab countries". The Pan-Arab Union Committee met in Cairo on February 14, 1945 to provide a constitution for the proposed Arab League in accordance with the Protocol of October 7, 1944. The "Pact of the Union of Arab States" was signed on March 27, 1945.

The Pact laid down that "a League of Arab States will be formed by those independent Arab countries who wish to join it," that it would possess a council on which all member-states would be on equal footing, that council would organise

periodical meetings to improve and strengthen mutual relations, co-ordinate their political programmes with a view to mutual co-operation and "safeguard by every possible means their independence and sovereign rights against all aggression", that the decisions of the Council would be binding on all member-states, disputes between member-states being referred to it for arbitration, that resort to force between member-states in settling disputes was forbidden, and that no state would be permitted to follow a policy prejudicial to the League of Arab States as a whole.

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## Chapter II

# MIDDLE EAST SINCE 1939

### (a) TURKEY

SINCE 1939 Turkey, like other small nations of Europe, was faced with the Fascist menace. Although Turkey had guarded itself and its neighbours to the fullest extent possible by alliance but the impending war shattered all prospects for long peace and security. The sudden annexation of Austria on March 13, 1938 caused feverish activity in Ankara diplomatic circles. The much talked of war seemed to be a reality. Consequently the entire energies of the Turkish nation were concentrated in intensifying preparations for self-defence and developing closer collaboration with friendly powers. The first step was taken in consolidating the Balkan Entente by the terms of which the 'Entente' gave recognition to the right of Bulgaria for rearming. The Bulgarian frontier claims, however, remained unsolved.

The occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Germans and the absorption of Albania indicated beyond doubt to the Turkish authorities that no Balkan defence system can itself resist the onslaught of the mighty Germans. The Turks rightly came to the conclusion that the Axis powers unchecked would in no time establish their foot-hold in the Asia Minor and the Mediterranean, as they had done in South Europe. The only hope of security for Turkey against the Fascist hordes was in alliance with a solid combination of Great Powers. Negotiations for a Mutual Assistance Pact between Turkey and the British Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain in

May 1939 gave the happy tiding to the House of Commons that there was "customary identity of views" between the two Governments. The Anglo-Turkish Mutual Assistance Pact was signed on May 12, 1939. The new Turkish link with Britain however did not mean any break with Russia. On the contrary it was warmly welcomed by "Izvestia" as "a link in the chain which is the only sure means of preventing the extension of aggression to new parts of Europe".

Meanwhile the conclusion of the Russo-German Pact in August 1939 completely upset the well-laid defensive plans of the Turkish Government. All their ago-old fears against the Russian 'Colossus' were aroused. M. Serajoglu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, promptly hurried to discover the "meaning of this volte face in Russian policy". M. Serajoglu, says Barbara Ward, is allged to have been treated with discourtesy and he was "left to kick his heels and inspect the Moscow underground". The negotiations broke down presumably because the Russians proposed as part of the Black Sea Mutual Assistance Pact, which was under discussion, that Turks should in all circumstances keep the Daradanelles closed to the warships of any nation hostile to the Soviet Union. The Turkish Government chose to regard this proposal of the Soviet Government as an obligation inconsistent with the agreement entered into with Britain and France.

Conscious of the great danger which threatened Turkey as a result of the Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact, M. Serajoglu on his return concluded a Pact of Mutual Assistance and Friendship on October 19, 1939 with Britain and France. The contracting parties declared that in the event of an act of aggression which might lead to war in the

Mediterranean, they would be prepared to cooperate effectively and to give each other all the aid and assistance that they could. Despite all these provisions, an important protocol recognised that Turkey would not be called upon to do any thing which would involve her in a war with Russia.

The Tripartite Mutual Assistance pact is reported to have met with great disfavour in the Soviet Russia and other countries. It is strange that while Russia for her own security had concluded a treaty with those who supposed to be the bitterest enemies of all that the Soviet Union stood for, it was indignant at the Tri-partite Pact which could have ensured the security of a small nation like Turkey. Despite the vituperations of the Axis and the Russian Press, Turkish statemen re-affirmed their friendship with the Soviet Union. Opening the first Session of the Sixth Kamutay on November 1, 1939, President Ismet Inonu said that the Tri-partite Pact with Britain and France "is not directed against any other state and merely aims at guaranteeing our own security in the service of peace and international security, at least in the area in which our influence can be exercised." The Turkish President added, "In every country the desire for peace demands different measures which vary according to its peculiar conditions, its geographical situation and its own possibilities. In Turkey's case the most appropriate measure certainly was to state precisely and in advance her attitude. In this connection our Foreign Minister has gone to Moscow for conversations which lasted three weeks. We had hoped that the negotiations would result in an accord of an even more advanced nature than the happy relations already existing with our old friend, the Soviet Union. To this end we have made all efforts in our power and at one time we

thought that we had been successful. Unfortunately it has been found impossible this time to reach a result conforming to the interests of both parties. However, the friendship between the two neighbouring countries rests on a strong basis and has not been impaired by the present impossibility of reaching agreement owing to temporary necessities. As in the past, we will in future maintain friendly relations between Turkey and Russia". "Opinions expressed in Turkey, particularly in neutral countries, on the occasion of recent developments", concluded Ismet Inonu, "have stressed the two qualities of our people. The Turks are devoted to their *friends and faithful to their engagements*. These characteristics have been the basis of our policy. In the future, past as at present, our friends who remain faithful can count on their friendship being reciprocated".

Did Turkey remain faithful to the Tri-partite Mutual Assistance Pact in accordance with which the Allies expected assistance when France fell in June 1940 and Italy entered into the war? Legally, according to Turkish officials, the Pact had "disappeared because of the erasion of one of the High Contracting parties, namely France". Furthermore Turkish declaration of war might have involved as its consequences armed conflict with the U.S.S.R., which was a negation of the Pact. Besides this even if Turkey would have waged war on moral grounds, such a step far from helping the Allies must have meant political suicide of the entire Turkish nation and a grave loss to the cause of the Allies. Turkey had also no reasonable cause to fight against Germany which had given her no direct offence. Accordingly when Herr Hitler in a personal message addressed to Ismet Inonu expressed his friendship with Turkey, the President had no alternative but



to reciprocate the same feelings which formed the basis of German-Turco Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression Pact of June 18, 1941, followed by Turco-German Trade Pact.

### **Turcc-German Pact.**

The Turco-German Pact aroused widespread resentment in Soviet Russia. The matter is so controversial that both Soviet and Turkish Press are indulging in mutual recriminations to this day. To appreciate the Turkish policy, it must be borne in mind that all through the aim of Turkey was to keep herself aloof from a war which was unlikely to benefit her in any way. The Soviet allegation, supposed to be based on the acquired 'Documents' of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany that Turkey by allying with Germany wanted to secure Bulgarian territory at Adrianople, a couple of islands in the Aegean Sea, the rounding off of Turkish Dominions at the expense of Syria, and certain territories in the Southern and Eastern zones adjacent to her, does not stand within the prospects of credence. This is negatived by the unequivocal assertion on November 1, 1940 of the President of the Republic that "Turkey did not covet an inch of territory beyond her own frontiers, and she had no intention of trespassing on anyone else's rights". The Soviet critics do not give any credit to the intelligence of Turkish statesmen who were the last persons to believe in German promises. Thus it is amply proved that Turkey had nothing to gain but every thing to lose by her participation in the war in which she had no interest. The Turkish diplomats always knew this and a few months after the conclusion of the Turco-German Pact, Ismet Inonu re-affirmed, "Turkey, therefore, in pursuance of established policy of peace and of observing strict neutrality

in the affairs of this world war means to get time sufficient enough to arm herself for any future eventuality which is bound to come one or the other day. The magnificent Russian resistance against the Nazi onslaught, which has amazed the world, has given Turkey a great respite to equip herself, and she cannot in any way be blamed of intransigence and ambiguity. Her neutrality has been of immense help to the Allied cause". Such a clear expression of views does not prove anything but that Turkey had more than pro-Allied leanings. Turkey feared Germany as a result of which her relations with the Axis remained cool and formal. She also remained apprehensive of Russian designs but on her own part she always tried to maintain friendly relations with her neighbours. To ensure her neutrality, Turkey needed allies and she found in the U.S.A. and Great Britain her best friends.

A Soviet journal 'New Times' levels the charge that during those critical days "Turkey did not help the Allies in the War, but on the contrary she rendered substantial assistance to the Germans". This is refuted by the then U.S., Under-Secretary of State Mr. Sumner Welles, who justifying the Turco-German Pact adds: "The incentive for this latter (Turco-German) agreement was increased by the fact that the British, even after the United States had entered the war and Lend-Lease materials began to be available, were unable to provide the armaments and aeroplanes which Turkey had expected as a result of her 1939 treaty with Great Britain. There was still another factor in the situation. During that period the United Nations were hard pressed in the Eastern Mediterranean, and things looked threatening throughout the Near East. From a strategic point of view, the United Nations did not consider it at all desirable that Turkey should

enter the war, and thus expose herself to a German march through the regions of Western Turkey, a possibility appearing more than likely at the time in view of the inferiority of Turkey's military defences and the inability of the Allies to afford any material protection".

This point of view was officially stated upon several occasions by British spokesmen in Parliament. The Soviet 'New Times' further accuses Turkey for trying economic assistance to Germany by being "one of the chief suppliers of scarce strategical raw materials, especially chromium Ore". This is ably answered by a Turkish author, Ahmet Izzet Feridum, who in an article published in 'Free Europe', January, 1943 wrote, "Inonu's desire to keep his country out of the war is well understood by the British. For example, when a monopoly could not be renewed, no dissatisfaction was publicly expressed in England. In spite of British help and American Lease-lend deliveries Turkey, exposed to acute danger, was short of tanks and had only two hundred first-line aircraft, although her up-to-date air fields could have accomodated six times that number. For about 50 per cent her exported chromium, Hitler offered Turkey Messerschmits and Heinkels, vitally important for Turkey's armament. More than thirty aircraft of the latest types have already been delivered to Turkey. London carefully studied the Ankara-Berlin agreement. Germany has to deliver her goods first only then do Turkish deliveries follow".

### **Turkey and Allies**

Hitler's indictment, just on the outbreak of the Russo-German war, that Russia wanted to annex the Straits and simultaneous expression of Churchill's regretal on Russia's

failure to achieve the particular 'benefit', presumably the Straits and Constantinople after the first Great War, caused great misgivings in Turkey. The situation had become so tense that both the Soviet and the British Governments had to issue statements, clarifying their position. Though Turkish suspicion regarding Russia's aims was not allayed, but the personal visit of Mr. Churchill to the President of the Turkish Republic and the subsequent conferences that took place between them at Adana went a long way in removing Turkish doubts.

The next stage in the Allied-Turkish relations is marked by an attempt on the part of the Allies to drag Turkey into the war. This attempt was however resisted by Turkey as it was neither in consonance with her policy of neutrality nor it was considered expedient by the Turkish military experts. The German troops were stationed till the close of the war in the Dodecanese islands and Mudros region. Had Turkey entered the war, almost all the industrial towns of Turkey which were stationed in that region would have been devastated in no time. In October, 1943, on the eve of Eden-Hull-Molotov Conference at Moscow, all efforts of Mr. Anthony Eden towards this end proved abortive. "The Turks", says Dr. S. M. H. Rahman, "felt no hesitation in declaring that they would not come in openly until they were assured of their relations how they stand with the Soviet Union after the war, and at the same time pointed the vulnerability of Istanbul and Ankara to indiscriminate German bombing". During April, 1944 Turkey is reported to have been persuaded again by the Allied nations to rally on the side of the Allies. But this time again Turkey had to refuse, as German forces had not quitted the strategical Turkish border. The Turkish atti-

tude was not liked by the Allies. Mr. Churchill on May 24, 1944 stated in the House of Commons, "The greatest disappointment which I had last October when I was not able to procure the necessary forces for gaining command of the Aegean Sea following upon the collapse of Italy and gaining possession of the principal Italian islands. That disappointment has of course been accompanied by an exaggerated attitude of caution on the side of Turkey". The Allies were further disgusted when Turkey permitted German ships to pass through the Straits from the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea in June, 1944.

The pressure of the Allies and the gradual vanishing of the German menace enabled Turkey to make openly a gesture of goodwill to the Allies. On August 12, 1944, Turkey severed off her relations with Germany and completely stopped the supply of Turkish chrome to Germany. After the Yalta Conference when the Allies made a declaration that only those nations will be qualified to associate with the United Nations, who will have declared war on the Axis Powers, before March 1, 1945, Turkey also declared war.

### **Russo-Turkish Tension**

While Britain's and America's relations with Turkey were reported to have improved considerably, the Kremlin's attitude towards Ankara changed from bad to worse. The Soviet Foreign Commissariat announced on March 21, 1945 that the Soviet Government had informed the Turkish Ambassador on March 19, 1945, of the denunciation by the U.S.S.R. of the Soviet Turkish treaty of friendship and neutrality signed in 1925 between Mr. Chicherin and Dr. Rustu Aras, in accordance with the provisions laid down in the protocol of

that treaty providing for such action. It was further pointed out that the treaty signed in Paris in 1925 for a three year period, on November 7, 1935 and expiring automatically on November 7, 1945 failing notice of renewal on May 7, no longer corresponded with the new situation created by the profound changes that had since occurred, especially as a result of the war, and needed serious improvement. 'Izvestia' emphasised that the treaty was originally signed in a period of instability when Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey were emerging from a war against intervening foreign powers, that "20 years of the relations between the U.S.S.R. and Britain were far from what they are today, when they are regulated by the treaty of alliance and have resulted in military and political successes", and that the U.S.S.R. did then "not even maintain diplomatic relations with the U.S.A., while now the two countries are bound by relations of fighting alliance and friendly collaboration" apart from the consolidation of friendly relations with Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Following the Soviet Government's denunciation of March 19, 1945, of the Soviet-Turkish Treaty of Friendship, a progressive deterioration in the relations between the two countries took place in the second half of 1945, due largely to sudden Soviet claims on Turkey. How true were the Turkish fears during the war is borne out by subsequent Soviet demands. On June 22, 1945, the Soviet Ambassador in Ankara, M. Vinogradov informed the Turkish Government that the Soviet Union would be willing to conclude a new Treaty of Friendship on condition that Turkey agreed to the retrocession to Russia of the Turkish districts of Kars, Artvin, and Aradhan, the granting of the bases in the Straits to Russia, revision of the Montreaux Convention due in 1926, and

certain unspecified changes in Turkish Thrace in favour of Bulgaria and Greece.

It may be mentioned here that the districts of Kars, Aradhan and Batum belonged to the Ottoman Empire for many centuries, their population being predominantly, and in some cases exclusively Muslim. After its defeat in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, the Ottoman Empire was forced to sign the Treaty of San Stefano which provided that, in compensation for a war indemnity of the 1,100,000,000 roubles which the Sultan was unable to pay, the four Turkish districts of Batum, Kars, Aradhan and Bayazid should be ceded to Russia. The Treaty of Berlin confirmed the cessation to Russia of the districts of Bayazid to Turkey. After the Russian defeat in 1917 the three districts were restored to Turkey by the Treaty of Brest Litvsk, but after the first world war changed hands frequently and, for a time, were partly occupied by British forces. Later, Lenin and Kemal Ataturk agreed that the city of Batum and the area immediately surrounding it, which had been greatly developed by Russia and used as the Black Sea terminus of the Baku-Batum oil pipe line, should remain Russian and that the rest of the three districts should be restored to Turkey, this agreement being embodied in the Treaty of Moscow, March 16, 1921 and the Treaty of Kars, October 13, 1921.

On July 10, 1945, M. Hasan Saka, the Turkish Foreign Minister, returning home from the San Francisco Conference, discussed the situation in London with the British Foreign Minister, Mr. Anthony Eden. During the talks he handed the British Government a memorandum, a copy of which was also sent to the U. S. Government setting forth the Turkish views.

The memorandum stated inter alia that Turkey, whilst entirely opposed to the granting of the bases in the Straits, was willing to ensure free passage through the Straits under international supervision provided that such supervision did not infringe her sovereign rights or endanger her security, and expressed the desire that Russo-Turkish relations should be settled so as to exclude the possibility of future complications. In a Press statement on the following day, M. Saka declared that, while preliminary negotiations for a new treaty of Friendship concerned Turkey and Russia alone, there could be no question of revising the Montreaux Convention otherwise than with the consent of the nine signatory Powers.

Following a statement by the U. S. State Secretary, Mr. Byrnes that during the Potsdam Conference the "Big Three" had agreed to approach the Turkish Government separately on these questions, Mr. Edward Wisdon, the U. S. Ambassador in Ankara, on November 2, 1945 presented a Note to the Turkish Government. This expressed the U. S. Government's readiness, if invited, to participate in any Conference called to amend the Montreaux Convention "in a sense more in harmony with the new conditions prevailing in the world", and, for this purpose, put forth the following principles. (1) The Straits should be open to merchantmen of all nations in time of war, (2) the Straits should be open to the transit of war vessels belonging to Black Sea Powers in all circumstances, (3) passage through the Straits should be forbidden to Black Sea Powers, or in execution of a mission under the authority of the United Nations, (4) certain changes should be introduced to bring the new constitution up-to-date, like substituting the United Nations Organization for the League of Nations, and eliminating Japan from the signatory Powers.



M. Serajoglu, the Turkish Premier, disclosing the above details at a Press Conference, expressed the desire for American participation in the future Conference, describing the American standpoint as 'reasonable' declared that the Montreaux provisions regarding the passage of shipping might be amended and established in a manner compatible with Turkish security and sovereignty, but stated that his Government would be in a position to form its views only after taking cognizance of the points of view of the three interested Powers. On November 21, 1945 the British Ambassador in Ankara, Sir M. Peterson, handed to M. Saka a memorandum which stated that the British Government were agreeable to the U. S. proposals, and that, while holding that the matter did not present a character of urgency, if the Turkish or Soviet Governments proposed to convene an international Conference for that object, the British Government would be disposed to participate. In the 'Times' of December 27, 1945 it was pointed out that the proposal that the Black Sea Powers should have the right to send their war vessels through the Straits in all circumstances if accepted, would supersede and enlarge Articles of the Convention, which granted to those Powers, the right of transit through the Straits for single war vessels of over 15,000 tons, with not more than two destroyer escorts. The 'Times' further pointed out that the U. S. proposal applying to "all circumstances" would supersede Article 20, which stipulated that "in time of war, Turkey being belligerent...the passage of warships shall be left entirely to the discretion of the Turkish Government"

The expiration on November 7, 1945 of the Russo-Turkish Treaty marked the opening of a new phase in the relations between both countries, characterised by renewed

attacks in the Soviet Press and continued pressure by means of growing territorial claims on Turkish territory. The tension was increased when university students demonstrated in Istanbul on December 4, 1945, attacking left wing newspaper offices and bookshops. While the Ankara correspondent of the Tass Agency reported to Moscow that the demonstration was "Fascist" and "anti-Russian" an official Turkish statement issued immediately afterwards described the allegations as "completely unfounded", saying that the demonstration was spontaneously organised by students, in spite of the police, with the intention of "asserting the position of Turkish youth, which is neither Nazi nor Communist". M. Serajoglu replying to a Russian pretest on December 11, 1945 said, "Turkey can offer resistance and will not hesitate to do as if efforts are made to infringe on her integrity...The whole country is resolved to remain free, and to fight for freedom, if threatened. Turkey will never become a vassal of any power".

The tension remained unabated in 1946 also. August 9, 1946 was the last day on which one of the signatories could demand a revision of the Convention. Twenty-four hours before this time-limit expired, the Soviet Union requested that revision. The Russian Note, after saying that "the events of the last war have clearly demonstrated that the Black Sea Straits regime established by the Convention signed in Montreux in 1936 did not meet the interests of the security of the Black Sea Powers or ensure conditions which would prevent the use of the Straits for purposes hostile to those Powers", quoted a number of instances during the late war when the Axis Powers brought their warships and auxiliary warships into and out of the Black Sea through the Straits, resulting in demarches and protests by the Soviet Government.

For its part, the Soviet Government proposed that a new regime be established for the Straits on the basis of the following principles:—

(1). The Straits should always be open for the passage of the merchantships of all countries. (2) The Straits should always be open for the passage of warships of the Black Sea Powers, (3) The passage of warships of non-Black Sea powers through the Straits should not be permitted, except in cases specially provided for. (4) Responsibility for establishing a regime for the Straits, the sole sea-route leading out of and into the Black Sea must lie with Turkey and the other Black Sea Powers. (5) Turkey and the Soviet Union, as the Powers most interested in and capable of ensuring the freedom of merchant shipping and security in the Straits, should jointly organise the defence of the Straits to prevent their use by other States for purposes hostile to the Black Sea Powers.

The Soviet Note caused deep concern in Turkey, where it was realised that the Russian demand for joint Soviet Turkish responsibility for the defence of the Straits would mean Russian bases and forces on Turkish territory. M. Peker, the new Turkish Prime Minister, referred to the Soviet demands when speaking on August 14, 1946 in the National Assembly on his Government's programme. "The Turkish Army", he said, "is ready to defend our country, and to safeguard the inviolability of our territory. We regard it as our first duty to maintain the Army in a state of full preparedness, and shall not miss any opportunity of improving its qualities". M. Peker added, "Our Government has studied the Soviet Note carefully, and will express her point of view when this examination is concluded. But I can say now that in this

matter, too, we are bound by international treaties, and above all we are obliged to safeguard our territorial integrity and sovereign rights we have taken note of the Soviet demands, and the Turkish Government is ready to negotiate with the Allies and interested States with a view to a revision of the Montreaux Convention of 1936". The Turkish Note of August 24, in reply to the Russian Note, did not object to a discussion of the first three points of the Soviet proposal, firstly, the Straits must always remain open for passage of merchantships of all countries, secondly, the Straits must always remain open for passage of warships of Black Sea powers and thirdly, passage through the Straits of warships of non-Black Sea powers should not be permitted except in special cases. But the Turkish Government turned down the fourth and fifth Soviet proposals for control of the Straits by Black Sea powers only and refused to share with the Soviet Union the defence of the Dardanelles and Bosphorous.

The Soviet Government, in a Note sent to Turkey on September 24, 1946 referred in detail to the existing Turkish-Soviet treaties which admitted the special position of Black Sea powers with regard to the Straits, adding, "Three conclusions show that the Soviet proposal stated in point 4, fully corresponds to the treaties signed by Turkey. Further delay in the carrying through of the proposals provided for in the treaties for establishing an international status in the Black Sea and the Straits cannot be justified. Only by joining hands would Turkey and the Soviet Union be able to ensure both freedom of merchant navigation and security of the Straits. The Soviet Government believes that its proposals should by no means affect the sovereignty of Turkey and at the same time should conform to the utmost interests of her security in

so far as joint measures by Turkey and the Soviets are better than measures taken by Turkey alone. The refusal of Turkey to share with the Soviet Union in the defence of the Straits deprives the Black Sea powers of the possibility of guaranteeing full security in this area should Turkey after refusing to accept the proposals of the U.S.S.R., begin to take military measures in the Straits jointly with some non-Black Sea Power. This, of course, would run directly counter to the interests of the security of the Black Sea Powers”.

Turkey in reply to the second Soviet Note, while maintaining its definite attitude concerning points four and five of the Russian demands, declared that it was ready to attend Conference with Russia, the United States, Britain and France as well as other signatories at Montreaux, excluding Japan, with a view to proceeding to negotiations for a revision of the Montreaux Convention. The Turkish Note, published on October 20, 1946, stated “Putting aside consideration of the necessity for every country to defend itself against any aggression from abroad, the Turkish Government finds it difficult to understand how, at a time when all people are eager for peace and have placed all their hopes in guarantees of security resulting from the work of the San Francisco Conference, a proposal subtracting collective security can be compatible with the aims and principles of that work”. Turkey, the Note declared, also asked itself how this same proposition which, in order to build security at home, thinks it can annihilate the security and sovereignty of its neighbour, can be reconciled with the obligation to respect the territorial integrity and independence of others. The Note added, “The Turkish Government, therefore, is obliged to reiterate once more that the fifth point in the Soviet Note of July 8 is incom-

patible with the sovereignty of Turkey and with its security which cannot permit any restriction on them".

Answering the Russian contention that the Black Sea is a closed sea and hence the Straits leading to it should be governed only by nations along its shores, Turkey, said he, could not agree. Undoubtedly Turkey is the first power to recognise the vital interest that free navigation across the Straits represents for Black Sea powers. The Note said, "That is the reason why she has without any difficulty admitted Russia to be represented at a Conference of revision". "Turkey" the Note continued, "has a clear conception of her quality as a Black Sea power, but she cannot forget she is a Mediterranean country too. Having a particularly sensitive geographical situation between the two worlds separated by restricted space of the Straits, she is conscious of the obligation imposed upon her in regard to the two seas that wash her shores. The Turkish Government cannot therefore consider the question of the Black Sea and the Straits as a problem interesting only the Black Sea powers". Turkey also proposed that passages in the Montreaux Convention relative to the role and intervention of the League of Nations be replaced with the United Nations in which Turkey "once more wants to express its deepest faith".

In his opening message to the Turkish Grand National Assembly on November 1, 1946, President Ismet Inonu emphasised that the questions of the Dardanelles continued to be a difficult problem, and added that if the independence and territorial integrity of Turkey were respected, she would be disposed to agree to amendments decided upon by an international conference. "We are convinced," he said,

"with perfectly clear conscience, that during the second World War, the Montreux Convention was applied by Turkey with the greatest attention, and the allegation that it was applied with a bias in favour of the Axis powers is unjust. We have nothing to fear from submitting our actions to an examination and decision by arbitration".

While the Soviet Union persists in its demands Turkey is watching the events with superb confidence. Relying on the strength of their own nation and the unstinted support of the great arsenals of democracy, the Turkish statesmen hope to withstand successfully the external pressure. The American economic aid has much heartened the Turks. Communicating President Truman's message of March 12, 1947 asking for legislation to enable the U.S.A. to supply to Greece and Turkey economic and financial aid to the amount of 400,000,000 dollars, Mr. Dean Acheson, the then Acting Secretary of State during Marshall's absence in Moscow, stated before the Foreign Relations Committee, "It is not too much to say that the outcome in Greece and Turkey will be watched with deep concern, throughout the vast area from the Dardanelles to the China Sea". He expressed the conviction that American aid to Turkey would block the spread of Communism throughout the whole Near and Middle East area, and "we are equally convinced that such assistance would not lead to the danger of war", saying that "by strengthening the forces of democracy and freedom you will do a great deal to eliminate friction between the Great Powers".

Turkish relations with the Arab States continue to be correct and with Iraq are cordial. The Turco-Iraqian Treaty has just been ratified by the Turkish Parliament and come into

force at once, Syria, of course, nurses its grievance over Alexandretta, which Turkey feels she cannot give up because it is the only good port on that coast. She has, however, offered Syria the free use of the port.

### (b) EGYPT

The possibility of an outbreak of war forced the Egyptian Government to take certain precautionary measures. That Egypt could constitute a springboard for invasion on the Axis Powers was never ignored by the Allied military experts. Their attention was concentrated towards this country all the more because on the security of Egypt depended also the *security of Suez Canal and the whole British Empire*. The Axis Powers too had no bellicose attitude towards Egypt. They were anxious to patch up their differences so that they might utilise the direct or indirect support of Egyptian masses at grave moments. But the Egyptian Government had little choice in matters of foreign policy. It was largely determined by those who had an upperhand in the country. Nevertheless the sympathies of an overwhelming number of Egyptians were always on the side of the Allies, though it did not preclude the possibility of agreement on certain matters with the Axis Powers.

Following the Anglo-Italian Agreement on April 16, 1938 which secured the Egyptian interests in the Nile waters and the freedom of the Suez Canal, both in times of war and peace, Marshal Italo Balbo, Governor of Libya, paid a short visit to Egypt in May 1939. In his audience with the King and in his talks with Premier Mahmud, Marshal Balbo emphasised Italy's friendly feelings towards Egypt and declared



that Italy had no territorial designs whatever on Egyptian territory. In a Press statement he said that Italy desired an improvement in the economic relations of the two countries and condemned mischievous foreign propaganda for trying to disturb Italo-Egyptian relations. He further said that the massing of troops in Libya was due solely to the fact that the colony provided a good training ground for the Italian army and did not in the least imply any menace to Egypt.

Egypt strengthened her relations with other powers close to her border. In June 1939 Abdel Fattah Yehia Pasha, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, visited Turkey and discussed various aspects of Turco-Egyptian relations with M. Serajoglu, and according to a statement issued in Ankara on June 22, the visit not only provided an occasion for "a striking demonstration of Turco-Egyptian friendship" but also resulted in the strengthening of cooperation between the countries in the economic field. The Egyptian Foreign Minister later visited Bucharest, Sofia and Belgrad. In the latter capital he stated that his visits were not of political character, but he had taken the opportunity of discussing the possibility of an intensification of the already excellent economic relations, which existed between England and Egyptian countries.

### **Ali Maher Pasha**

Meanwhile a change in the Cabinet took place on August 12, 1939, Mahmud Pasha tendered his resignation on grounds of ill health. Ali Maher Pasha, alleged to be pro-Nazi formed a Ministry with 5 Saadist and 9 Independents. The Liberals refused to co-operate with the Ministry. The relations between Egypt and the German Reich were severed on

September 3, 1934, following the Anglo-French declaration of war on Germany. In a statement to London "Times" on September 7, 1939, the Egyptian Premier, Aly Pasha Maher declared "The Government as well as every Egyptian are heart and soul with Britain in the great struggle for justice and preservation of liberty and freedom, Egypt and its people are loyal and sincere friends of Britain, and will do everything within their powers to help her. Our obligations under the treaty are being discharged to the letter. We stand for law and order, and shall oppose with all our might any attempt at domination by the brutal force. It is in our interest as it is Britain's to resist the policy of force. We struggled for years to obtain our independence and to preserve this independence we are ready to make every sacrifice".

Rumours spread in that the British Government was attempting to force Egypt to enter the war in the absence of a direct attack by the enemy were officially denied in London on June 21, 1939. As Aly Maher Pasha was not looked with favour by Britain he tendered his resignation on June 23, 1940. The formation of a National Cabinet under the Wafdist Leader, Nahas Pasha, was suggested, but although all parties agreed to serve under his leadership Nahas Pasha refused to head such a Cabinet unless elections were held.

### **Hasan Pasha Sabry**

A new Cabinet was formed on June 28, 1940 by Hassan Pasha Sabry, formerly Minister in London. It was a coalition Ministry (excluding the Wafdists) comprising six Independents, four Liberals, four Saadists, one Nationalist and one Ittihadist.

The new Premier in a statement to the Egyptian Parliament on July 3, 1940 said that the policy of the Government would be to fulfil loyally the conditions of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty, to try to avoid Egyptian involvement in war and to maintain good relations with all the countries which were not at war. His regime was however very short. On November 14, 1940 Hassan Sabry Pasha collapsed and died from heart failure while reading the speech from the Throne in the Egyptian Parliament.

### **Hussein Sirry Pasha**

On the following day the Premiership was assumed by Hussein Sirry Pasha, an Independent. In the Egyptian Parliament on November 25, the new Premier pledged his support to the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and re-affirmed Egypt's non-belligerency. The foreign policy of Egypt, he added, would be maintained and good relations continued with all countries not at war with Britain. Sirry Pasha handed his Cabinet's resignation to King Farouk on June 4, 1941 after attempt to enlist the support of the Wafdist party had failed but the projected Cabinet reorganisation was abandoned after inter-party meetings. It was understood that the Premier had expressed his willingness to serve in a Cabinet headed by the Wafdist leader, Nahas Pasha, but that the latter was only willing to accept the Premiership after the dissolution of the Chamber and the holding of general elections. On July 31, 1941 the Cabinet again resigned and was reconstituted by Sirry Pasha on August 4. The new Cabinet was a Coalition of the Liberals, Saadists and Independents, each being represented by five members. The Saadists had hitherto refused to join the Cabinet and had demanded a more vigor-

ous war policy, but those difficulties were overcome by negotiations. The Wafdists, however, persisted in their refusal to join the administration unless general elections were held.

The Egyptian Government's action in breaking off relations with Vichy France on January 5, 1942 led to a constitutional crisis, owing to the fact that King Farouk, who was away from Cairo at the time, claimed that he had not been consulted and the Royal prerogative had thereby been infringed. He demanded for the resignation of the Foreign Minister, Selim Samy Pasha. This involved the principle of collective cabinet responsibility, and in consequence the Sirry Pasha Ministry resigned on February 2, 1942. On February 4, 1942, reported Andrew Roth, the British authorities threw a ring of armoured car around Abdine Palace and demanded of King Farouk that within 24 hours he must appoint as Premier, Nahas Pasha the leader of the Wafd. Nahas, it was stated, was by no means pro-British but he was definitely anti-Fascist and the British authorities knew he could be counted on to mobilise popular support against the approaching Axis forces. King Farouk's indignation knew no bounds when he received the ultimatum. He might have refused had his adviser Hussein Pasha not lectured him sternly, "Your father delivered to you to my care and I order you to summon Nahas Pasha". The King capitulated but his hatred for Nahas Pasha is traced back to that day.

### **Nahas Pasha**

Soon after Nahas Pasha became Premier he declared that he would govern in a democratic manner through a

freely elected Parliament and that the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 would be faithfully carried out. The results of the elections held in March 1942 showed that the Wafdists had secured an overwhelming majority, with 216 seats out of the 264 in the Chamber. Independents gained 18, Liberals 4, Watanists 2 and Saadists 24. Though the elections were officially boycotted by the Liberals and the Saadists, some members of those parties ran as Independents. Among those defeated were Ismail Sidky Pasha, a former Premier who lost his seat to a Wafdist. Nahas Pasha had a series of minor conflicts with King Farouk and finally took the step of arresting a former Prime Minister, Ali Maher Pasha

Addressing Allied representatives in Cairo on February 16, Premier Nahas Pasha again emphasised Egypt's attachment to the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance of 1936, declaring that she was definitely ranged in the democratic camp and could under no circumstances ally herself with the totalitarian States. While Nahas was doing everything to assist the Allies, Makram Pasha Ebeid, a noted orator, together with 21 of his followers criticised the Premier for subserviency towards the British. After his expulsion from the Wafdist Party, Makram Ebeid on July 24, 1942, founded a new opposition group in the Chamber known as the "Independent Wafdist Group". He also addressed in April, 1943 a petition to King Farouk, subsequently known as the "Black Book" containing various accusations of corruption and nepotism against Nahas Pasha. Replying to those allegations in the Senate and the Chamber, Nahas declared that he and his Cabinet were fully prepared to refute the charges in Parliament and said that although Makram Ebeid Pasha had professed his readiness to face the prosecution for

libel, this would take a long time during which the Government would be exposed to all sorts of wanton attacks. On July 12, 1943 Makram Ebeid Pasha was formally expelled from the Parliament after a long debate, a motion having been passed that he had made calumnious accusations against members of the Government and Parliament and that his conduct thus rendered him unworthy to represent the country. The relations of Nahas were further strained with his sovereign. King Farouk wanted Sheikh el Muraghi, Rector of the Al Azhar University to make a speech and himself to provide great entertainment on the 1,000 anniversary of the great Muslim University Al Azhar on September 18, 1943. Nahas Pasha took exception to the proposal. He complained that he had not been duly informed of the plan beforehand, and as for speech-making, nobody but himself should make a speech on such an occasion. The celebrations were therefore dropped. Furthermore, Nahas Pasha is said to have ignored many royal prerogatives. He insisted that the Chief of the Royal Cabinet, previously the King's personal choice should have the approval of the Prime Minister.

Nahas Pasha's position was however stable. His announcement in the Egyptian Parliament that he had received a written assurance from the British Ambassador, Sir Miles Lampson that Britain would use its good offices to see that Egypt was represented at all peace negotiations affecting Egyptian interests on a footing of equality and that Britain would take no part in such discussions affecting such interests without prior consultation with the Egyptian Government, further strengthened his position.

By the end of the year 1943 there was considerable talk about revising the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936. Nahas

Pasha announced on January 3, 1944 that the time was not ripe for modifying the treaty with Britain. In 1943 the Soviet Government also appointed a diplomatic representative in Cairo. In the Minister's staff was a counsellor who was a Russian Muslim. The problem of Arab unity and the difficulties of the economic situation were the chief concerns of Nahas Pasha during the year.

The long-standing differences between King Farouk and Nahas Pasha culminated in the King's dismissal of his Prime Minister who had held office with the support of an overwhelming majority in Parliament since the anxious days of February 1942. "As I am anxious" wrote King Farouk to Nahas Pasha on October 8, 1944, "to see my country governed by a democratic Ministry working for the fatherland and enforcing the laws of the constitution in the spirit as well the letter giving equality to all Egyptians in rights and duties and bring to the masses food and clothing, and have decided to dismiss you from office." It was stated that the contributory cause of the Premier's dismissal was the fact that a few weeks earlier, the Government had dismissed the Director-General of Public Security, Mohammad Ghazaly Bey, who at the King's command, had ordered the pulling down of posters which coupled the names of the King and Nahas Pasha.

### **Ahmed Maher Pasha**

Consequent on Nahas Pasha's dismissal the King called on Dr. Ahmed Maher Pasha, Leader of the Saadist party who broke with the Wafd in 1937. Political personalities, such as Aly Maher Pasha and Makram Ebeid Pasha, who had been interned under the Wafdist regime, were set free. Makram

Pasha became a Finance Minister in the new Cabinet and Mohammad Ghazaly Bey was also reinstated. On taking office Ahmed Maher Pasha issued a statement bitterly attacking his predecessor as follows:- "Nahās Pasha has been the worst of dictators. He maintained in Egypt a veiled constitutional dictatorship. Dictators such as Hitler and Mussolini take the whole responsibility for their actions, while Nahas has maintained concentration camps and an autocratic regime under the veil of democracy. False elections were carried out under martial law with a strong censorship. It is for this reason that the Opposition refused to take part in the Government. The King's timely intervention has raised the country from corruption". Maher Pasha declared that as regards foreign relations Egypt stood firmly at the side of the Allies in war and peace and adhered to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, envisaged her role as one of economic, cultural and scientific liaison between the Occident and the Orient, and would do all in her power to foster the closest collaboration between the Arab States. Ahmad Maher Pasha after making a statement in session to the Chamber in the evening of February 24, regarding an Egyptian declaration of war on Germany and Japan, was assassinated while crossing the Pharaonic Hall in the Parliament building to make a similar statement to the Senate, being hit at point blank range by five bullets and dying shortly after. The assailant was a 26-years old lawyer named Mahmud Issawy who had been earlier arrested in the war for pro-Nazi sympathies.

### **Nokrashy Pasha**

A special cabinet meeting was called immediatly after the assassination following which King Farouk entrusted the



Foreign Minister, Mahmud Fahmy el Nokrashy with the Premiership. Respected in Egypt for his statesman-like qualities and political impartiality, he was a strong opponent of totalitarianism and a warm friend of Britain. Meanwhile the results of the general election came out Saadists secured 124, Liberals 74, Makramists 30, Independents 29 and Nationalists 7. The Government coalition comprising of Saadists, Liberals, Makramists and Nationalists thus secured an overwhelming majority, the Wafd having boycotted the elections.

It will be recalled the Government of Nahas Pasha and the Wafd had become increasingly unpopular because of its failure to adopt an adequate programme of internal reforms and because of the belief which clings like a miasma round almost every Egyptian Government while it is in power that it was oversubservient to British interests. It therefore became incumbent on Nokrashy Pasha to his countrymen that he was not going to play a second fiddle in Egyptian politics. Such an attitude had become all the more necessary in view of the fact that after boycotting the elections the Wafd was taking fullest advantage of its new freedom to regain in popular estimation as the outspoken champion of Egyptian nationalism.

Nokrashy Pasha, therefore, declared in the Senate on August 6, 1945, that the time had arrived for a revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, the removal of all restrictions on Egypt's independence and the withdrawal of foreign troops. "Egypt" he said, "again and again has given proof of her faithfulness and has steadfastly adhered to her allies during the War. The Nations greatly appreciated Egypt's help to the cause of democracy and the far-reaching effects

that this help had on the victory of the Allies. No better justification and no firmer grounds could be found for the removal of restrictions imposed on the country's independence and for the withdrawal of foreign troops. As for the unity of the Nile Valley which include both Egypt and the Sudan, the principles of this new era which have spread all over the world are sufficient guarantee for its achievement. This unity represents the heart-felt desire of all the people of the Nile Valley". The Egyptian Government's formal request for a revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 was contained in a Note sent to Britain on December 26, 1945. The British reply of January 26, 1946 expressed British readiness to review the treaty arrangements, and stated that the British Ambassador in Cairo would shortly be instructed to hold preliminary talks with the Egyptian Government to that end. The position of Nokrashy Pasha's Government had been weakened by some resignations in the Ministry and its fall was precipitated by the refusal of the Wafdist party to participate in the forthcoming negotiations.

### **Ismail Sidky Pasha**

On February 17, 1946, Ismail Sicky Pasha was invited by King Farouk to form a Government after Nokrashy Pasha's resignation. In the new Cabinet, five Ministers were Liberals and the remainder Independents were not invited to participate while the Saadists and the Independent Wafdists decided to withhold active co-operation for the time being, though without going into Opposition. The Wafdists who at the beginning of February had issued a manifesto repudiating the Egyptian and British Note on treaty revision and accusing the British of attempting to "make Egypt into a British colony,"

and thereby made their participation impossible, apart from the fact that they had no deputies in the Chamber owing to their boycott of the elections.

Premier Attlee announced in the House of Commons that the "Government of the U. K., have proposed to withdraw all British naval, military and air forces from Egyptian territory and to settle in negotiations the stages and date of the completion of this withdrawal and arrangements to be made by the Egyptian Government to make possible mutual assistance in time of war or imminent threat of war in accordance with the alliance. But Mr. Bevin, British Foreign Secretary, assured the British nation that it would not amount to the liquidation of British interests in Egypt. "I will give this House the assurance," he said, "that I shall be no party to leaving a vacuum. If the Egyptian Government tries to force a situation in which there is nothing, no regional defence or organisation to take our place that I cannot agree to".

### **Treaty Revision Talks**

An Egyptian Royal Decree of March 8, 1946 announced that the Egyptian Delegation to Cairo Conference would consist of eight non-party members, among them Premier Sidky Pasha, Lufty es-Said Pasha, Foreign Minister and four former Premiers Aly Maher Pasha, Abdul Fattah Pasha, Hussein Sirry Pasha and Nokrasy Pasha, two members of the Saadist Party, and one each from the Liberal Constitutionalists and Kotla (Independent Wafdist) parties. An invitation was also sent to the Wafdist Party. Nahas Pasha had made stipulations for their participation which the Government could not accept, including demands that Nahas Pasha should

head, and Wafdist members should constitute a majority of the delegation. On March 14, 1946, the Wafd issued a manifesto saying it would not be bound by the results of negotiations.

Though the treaty revision talks have dragged on for about a year, no agreement has been reached on the conflicting points. One of them was the evacuation of British troops from Egypt. The reason why the Egyptians are so opposed to the maintenance of British troops in their homeland is not difficult to understand. The history of modern Egypt is marked with several instances where British troops have been used not only to quell disturbances and impose the British view-point by force of arms, but to effect change of Government. The Treaty of 1936 was thought to have closed this unhappy chapter in Anglo-Egyptian relations, but subsequent events reawakened Egyptian distrust of British intentions. They not only felt that they had been given insufficient credit for the way they stood by the Allies during the war and honoured the Military terms of the Alliance, but the unfortunate manner in which British troops were used in February 1942 to compel King Farouk to accept a Wafdist Government was held to be an insult to Egyptian nationalism. It gave rise to the impression that Egypt cannot hope to shape her own destiny until the last British soldier has quitted Egypt. Britain is however not opposed to evacuation of troops. The period within which the troops should withdraw is the issue on which the two parties are not agreed upon. While Britain is convinced that three years constitute the minimum period of time in which to implement her declared undertaking to evacuate Egypt, the Egyptian delegates, on the other hand, are insistent that the evacuation should be completed within a year of the signing of the Treaty.

The establishment of a Joint Defence Council is another point at issue. Shedding light on it, Mr. Bevin in a speech to the Anglo-Egyptian Chamber of Commerce said, "We do not want to dominate Egypt. I would like to see our defence built up, not on a basis of our protecting you, but on joint co-operation, a partnership paid for and manned by both of us on a common basis of partnership between the Middle East and ourselves. In that way I can see the mutual interests, mutual character, and great design of that area contributing not only to its own security and prosperity, but contributing a great example to wider regions of the world by its mutual understanding and common effort".

Commenting on this speech, George Audit wrote in 'Monthly labour', "Three main trends within this 'great design' have become clear, particularly during the last six months. First has been to stall on the decision to evacuate Egypt, the second to organise an alternative system of bases, and the third to give increased support to the most reactionary and anti-Soviet force within the Arab League". The truth about the proposal for the Joint Defence Council seems to be that Egypt has had so much of British interference in the past that she is reluctant to enter into the least commitments for the future that may menace her full independence. What exactly has been set down in writing by one or the other party, and been turned down by the opposite side, has never been authentically revealed, but matters to the Joint Defence Council were given little or no attention in the final stages.

The crux of the problem was not either evacuation or Joint Defence Council but the Egyptian and British claims of sovereignty over Sudan. Justifying the Egyptian stand, Globe's

Cairo correspondent wrote, "Britain is apparently contesting Egypt's claim to sovereignty over the Sudan—a sovereignty which has never ceased to exist since the time of the Egyptian Khedives". He added, "Perhaps it might be argued that the protectorate which Britain unilaterally established over the Sudan during the first world war did end that sovereignty over Sudan but the protectorate was ended in 1922 and the status quo was reaffirmed. In fact, the appointment of the British Governor-General of the Sudan at the present time must have the signature of the King of Egypt". The respective interest of Britain and Egypt in the Sudan are economic and geographic. Britain has large investments of capital in the Sudan and the strategic interest natural to a country who feels it necessary to guard the Middle East cross-road.

Egypt has geographical interest in the Nile valley, and "the unity of the Nile Valley" has become the slogan of the movement for union with the Sudan. Her primary interest is in the water of the Nile itself, on which depends, through the elaborate irrigation system of Egypt, the whole of Egypt's economic life.

It is difficult to assess the real political aspirations of the people of Sudan which is bound to play the determining role in the long-run. It must be remembered that the Northern Sudan is Arab and Muslim in its culture, with some natural affinities with Egypt, and the southern is African and tribal in its structure, having affinities with the tropical African areas further South. One part of public opinion, represented by the Ashiga Party at the head of the General Students Federation, now stands for some sort of dominion status in an Egypt embracing the Sudan. The Umma Party stands for a

continuation of the present condominium and the rapid development of the Sudanese independence and by that the party means independence from Egypt as well as Britain. The respective leaders are Sayed Ali Merghani, the aged leader of the Ashiga, and Syed Abdel Rahman el Mehdi, the almost equally aged leader of the Umma Party. It is a significant factor that while the Ashiga Party is accused of retarding the movement for the independence of Sudan, the Umma Party is similarly accused of being pro-British. The Egyptian attitude towards Sudan is fully clarified by King Farouk's speech on November 14, 1946, in which he said "My Government wants to proclaim that this unity only tends to develop vital relations now existing between Egypt and the Sudan as there is no life for one without the other and no progress or stability for one without the other. One of Egypt's first aims is to assure the well being of the Sudanese, develop their interests and help them effectively to govern themselves as soon as possible".

The Anglo-Egyptian talks reached a dangerous state in September 1946. This was followed by the resignation of Sidky Pasha and the suspension of the Anglo-Egyptian talks and the departure for London of the acting leader of the British delegation, Lord Stansgate, who was accompanied by the British Ambassador, Sir Ronald Campbell. The suspension of negotiations had also its repercussions on the internal politics. King Farouk invited his uncle Sherif Sabry Pasha, an independent member of the Treaty delegation, to form an all-Party Government. Sabry Pasha's efforts however proved abortive. Makram Ebeid Pasha refused to co-operate with the Saadist's and Liberal Constitutionalists. The Saadists and Liberals are reported to have specified that they would

participate only on condition that the present Parliament were not dissolved. The Wafdist Party agreed with Sabry Pasha that the Parliament should be dissolved. Confronted with such irreconcilable demands, Sabry Pasha regretted his inability to form an all-party Government. Thereupon King Farouk again asked Sidky Pasha to remain in office. Sidky Pasha had to encounter many difficulties. Soon after Loutfy el Sayed Pasha and Saba Habashi Pasha resigned from the Cabinet. Three non-party members of the delegation, Sharif Sabry Pasha, Hussein Sirry Pasha and Aly el Shams Pasha issued a joint statement accusing Sidky Pasha of wishing to "keep the door open", instead of rejecting the British proposals categorically. The Wafd Party issued a long manifesto reaffirming their viewpoint and attacking the negotiations which have lasted for months without achieving any of the national demands. Makram Ebeid Pasha also said that to continue negotiations would lead to the loss of opportunity of submitting the Egyptian case to the U.N.O. and declared that responsibility for failure must be shared by Sidky Pasha as well as Britain.

Meanwhile Sidky Pasha resolved to visit London to negotiate the treaty. The immediate result of this decision was that the two party leaders Nokrashy Pasha (Saadist) and Hussein Heykal Pasha (Liberal) declined to accompany the Prime Minister who, eventually left with the Foreign Minister, Ibrahim Abdul Hady Pasha, returned with an allegedly new draft treaty. Broadly speaking it was understood that while King Farouk was recognised as King over the Sudan in a manner in which the sovereignty of the Egyptian crown had not been hitherto recognised, the draft contemplated no change in the existing administration



in the Sudan to impair the right of the Sudanese people to guide their own interests. King Farouk having dissolved by decree the irreconcilable delegation, which he appointed in March 1946, Sidky Pasha obtained from the Egyptian Parliament, amid considerable disorders in Cairo, a vote authorising him to accept the draft which he negotiated with Mr. Bevin. Before the vote was taken Makram Ebeid Pasha and his supporters left the Chamber and the action taken by King and Sidky Pasha was denounced by the Wafd and Nationalist Muslim Brotherhood as unconstitutional. Meanwhile there continued to be some confusion as to what have been agreed between Mr. Bevin and Mr. Sidky Pasha with regard to the Sudan. Sidky's assertion that King Farouk had been accorded *de jure* sovereignty over the Sudan was contradicted by Sir Hubert Huddleston, Governor-General of the Sudan with an endorsement by the Whitehall. Due to failing health Sidky Pasha felt himself unfit to meet the rising storm and consequently tendered his resignation in December, 1946.

### **Nokrashy Pasha Again**

Nokrashy Pasha accepted the King's invitation to form a coalition Ministry of the Saadists and the Liberals. The new Premier does not differ from his predecessor substantially in outlook or in the measure of support which he can expect from the Parliament or the Palace. Like him he has also to cope with tremendous opposition from the Wafd and the British Government. Nokrashy Pasha had however given definite indications within the first month of his assumption of office that he would fight valiantly for the just demands of the Egyptians. In an eagerly-awaited statement on

the Sudan question which was cheered by both sides of the House. Nokrashy Pasha reiterated in the Chamber on December 31, 1946 the previous declaration that Egypt and the Sudan were indivisible. The British policy which aimed at severing the Sudan from Egypt was premediated. He added that the Sudanese wished to unite with Egypt and would never accept any other status. Makram Ebeid Pasha, Leader of the Opposition, at the end of Premier's speech ran to Nokrashy Pasha and shook hands with him vigorously. He then stated amidst enthusiastic cheers, "The opposition joins hands with the Government and will support it in its policy concerning the Sudan".

Tired of the prolonged negotiations with the British Government, the Egyptian Government as a last resort appealed to the U. N. O. The fact that the Security Council debate on Egypt's case ended in complete deadlock has further embittered the feelings of the Egyptians. This is evident by the recent demonstrations against the Security Council in Egypt and adverse Press comments.

While recent press reports suggest that fresh efforts are being made to resume talks with Egypt, no official confirmation is available. "The stationing of foreign armed forces" said Nokrashy Pasha before the Security Council, "in our territory puts Egypt in a position of inequality in discussion of the dispute as we are under constant pressure. A potential threat is always there".

### (c) PALESTINE

On the outbreak of the War, Palestine showed comparative calm though terrorist outrages continued. On August 6,

1942, it was announced in the Commons that a Palestine Regiment was to be formed. This new unit of the British Army was to consist of separate Arab and Jewish infantry battallions for general service in the Middle East. Among the Arabs this announcement appeared to have no reaction. Jewish political leaders on the other hand seemed to view the statement as a partial triumph for the Zionist claim of a "Jewish Army" and did all they could to induce Jews in Palestine to join the forces. While the Arabs of Palestine had largely left the defence of their local cause in the hands of Arabs outside Palestine (their own leaders having been mostly deported) the Zionists showed intense anxiety over the future and in some quarters resolved to take the law into their own hands. The Jews, convinced of an Allied victory, were now mainly engaged in helping as many Jews as possible to escape to Palestine from Nazi-dominated lands.

The activities of Zionists both within and without Palestine, caused much perturbations among Arabs, also within and without Palestine, but opposition to the British Government came from Zionist extremists, who would be content with nothing less than the conversion of the whole of Palestine into a Jewish State. Reacting to a Government communique on March 23, 1943, which contained proposals for post-war development and reconstruction, they urged non-cooperation. Matters reached a climax over the trial in Jerusalem on August 11, 1943, when two British soldiers were sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment each for helping to smuggle arms and ammunitions to Jews in Palestine. On October 26, 1943 Mr. Ben Gurion, the veteran Palestine Jewish leader, resigned from the Jewish Agency Executive, owing to differences with Dr. Weizmann, Head of the Zionist movement.

Dr. Weizmann was credited with favouring partition in Palestine, whereas Mr. Ben Gurion was reported to want the whole of Palestine as a Jewish State.

Extremist Jews impatient of the slow methods of the Jewish Agency for converting Palestine into a Jewish State, staged incidents almost every month. The organisations involved were three, the Haganna, the Irgun Zvi Leumi and the "Stern Group". In July, 1944 bombs exploded in the police headquarters and on August 8, 1944, the car of the High Commissioner was ambushed as Sir Harold Mac Michael, was going to a farewell gathering. The series of terrorist outrages culminated in the assassination of Lord Moyne, British Minister of State in the Middle East, in Cairo in November, 1944.

These outrages were not without their effects. To appease the Jews, the British War Office announced that the Government had decided to accede to the request of the Jewish Agency and that a Jewish Brigade Group should be formed to take part in active operations. The World Zionist Conference met at London in August 1945 and demanded that Jewish Agency be invested with all authority to bring to Palestine as many Jews as necessary, that an international loan be given for the transfer of 1,000,000 Jews to Palestine and that international facilities be provided for the exit and transit of all Jews who want to settle in Palestine.

Meanwhile the Arabs were insistently demanding the immediate cessation of Jewish immigration, a prohibition on further land sales, and the recognition of Palestine Arab independence similar to that granted to adjacent Arab nation.

In Washington the views of the Arab League on Palestine situation were conveyed to the State Department on October 12, 1945 in a Note presented jointly by the Egyptian, Syrian, Lebanese and Iraqi representatives in particular and the Arab peoples in general, and characterising Zionism as an "aggressive move towards the heart of the Arab nation". On October 20, 1945 the Saudi Arabian Ministry in London issued the text of a letter sent by King Ibn Saud to the late President Roosevelt, and of the President's reply dated April 5, 1945 in which he recalled the assurances which he had personally given to King Ibn Saud at their meeting in Egypt and at the time of the Cairo Conference that no decisions on Palestine would be taken without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews and that he would undertake no action which might prove hostile to the Arab people.

### **Anglo-American Committee**

To ease the situation Mr. Bevin, British Foreign Secretary announced on November 13, 1945 in the House of Commons that an Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry would consider the whole Palestine question. Mr. Bevin stated, "The Zionist cause has strong supporters in U.S.A., Great Britain, the Dominions and elsewhere, civilisation has been appalled by the sufferings which have been inflicted in recent years on the persecuted Jews in Europe. On the other side of the picture, the cause of the Palestinian Arabs has been espoused by the whole Arab world and more lately has become a matter of keen interest to their 90,000,000 co-religionists in India". President Truman approving the suggestion, released the text of the letter sent by him to Premier Attlee on August 31, 1945, wherein he suggested the admission of an additional 100,000 Jews into Palestine. Mr. Truman's disclosure evoked

bitter protest from Mr. Jinnah who in a telegram to Mr. Attlee on October 3, 1946 described American President's proposal as an "unwarranted encroachment on another country, monstrous and highly unjust" declaring that any departure from the White Paper would be "a flagrant breach of faith with Muslim India" and would entail "most disastrous consequences". At a public meeting in Bombay on November 8, 1945 Mr. Jinnah declared that "Muslim India will not remain mere spectators of the Arab struggle against British imperialism and against the illegal immigration of Jews into Palestine". On November 5, 1945 the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Premier Indian State, sent a message to the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, asking for a "just and equitable settlement of the Palestine question...in accordance with the promises given to the Arabs in the past."

The Anglo-American Inquiry Committee visited many lands and interviewed leading Arabs and Jews. Most of the Arabs who gave evidences before the Committee based their case upon the fact that Palestine is a country which Arabs have occupied for more than 1,000 years and a denial of Jewish historical claims to Palestine. In issuing the Balfour Declaration, they maintained, the British Government gave away something that did not belong to Britain and conflicted with Covenant of the League of Nations from which it derived its authority. Arabs denied that the part played by the British in freeing them of Turks gave Great Britain the right to dispose of their country. They asserted that Turkish rule was preferable to British rule, if the latter involved their subjection to Jews. They considered the Mandate as a violation of their right of self-determination, since it was forcing on them immigration which they did not desire and would

not tolerate an invasion of Palestine by Jews. The Arabs pointed out that all the surrounding Arab states had now been granted independence. They argued that they were just as advanced as were citizens of nearby States. Christian Arabs united with Muslims in all these contentions. They demanded that their independence should be recognised at once and they would like Palestine, as a self-governing country to join the Arab League. Arabs attached the highest importance to the fulfilment of the promises made by the British Government to Ibn Saud in February, 1945. Suggestion that self Government should be withheld from Palestine until Jews had acquired majority seemed outrageous to Arabs. Arab spokesmen professed the greatest sympathy for the persecuted Jews, but they pointed out that they had not been responsible for this persecution and that it was unjust that they should be compelled to atone for the sins of the Western peoples by accepting into their country hundreds of thousands of victims of European anti-Semitism. Refuting the suggestion that the Jewish population had conferred substantial benefits on Arabs, they contented that such improvement as there might have been in their standard of living was solely attributable to their own efforts, perhaps with a measure of aid at some points from the administration. The Arabs asserted that at least equal improvements occurred in other Arab countries and that the action taken by the Government to assist Jewish industry and agriculture had reacted unfavourably on Arabs. Import duties for the protection of Jewish industries, for example, are said to have confronted Arab consumers with the necessity of buying high priced local products in place of cheaper imported goods. In any event, Arabs declared that if they must choose between freedom and material improvement they would prefer freedom.

The Committee however gave its verdict against the Arabs and made the following important recommendations:—

(1) The Committee incorporating the suggestions of President Truman recommended that 100,000 certificates be authorised immediately for admission into Palestine of Jews who have been victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution and that these certificates be awarded as far as possible in 1946 and that actual immigration be pushed forward as rapidly as conditions will permit.

(2) The Committee further stating that the establishment of an independent Palestinian States would result in civil strife such as may threaten the peace of the World, recommended that until this hostility disappeared, "the Government of Palestine be continued as at present under Mandate pending execution of a trusteeship agreement under the United Nations".

The publication of the report caused the strongest indignation throughout the Arab countries. Azzam Pasha, Secretary-General of the Arab League declared on April 30, 1946 that it would meet with the strongest opposition from the Arab States. Mr. Jinnah in a statement from New Delhi the same day described the report as "gross betrayal" of promises made to the Arabs, adding that "the Arabs and Muslims will not take it lying down if these monstrous recommendations are implemented". The Iraqi Government lodged its protest against the report in Washington on May 2, 1946 and the Syrian Government took similar action in Notes to London and Washington. The Emir Abdullah of Transjordan,



then in Baghdad declared on May 5, that he looked to the Arab League to take "most determined measure in retaliation", adding that "we can never allow Palestine to be overwhelmed by any race through immigration or any other means".

At the invitation of King Farouk of Egypt, a conference of leaders and representatives of all the Arab States was convened on May 29, 1946 under the auspices of the Arab League. A communique issued after the Conference stated that they would oppose any further immigration as a violation of the White Paper of 1939. At the time the hope was expressed that "the two friendly democracies will not do anything in connection with the Palestine problem which would compel the Arab world to retaliate".

During the six months prior to the publication of the report there had been a number of terrorist outrages in Palestine by the illegal Jewish "Irgun Zvi Leumi" and "Stern-Group" organisations. One of the worst outrages occurred on July 22, 1946 when Jewish terrorists of the illegal Irgun Zvi Leumi organisation blew up a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, containing British military headquarters in Palestine.

### **London Conference**

The Arab opposition to the Anglo-American report had its effect. Premier Attlee announced on May 1, 1946 that "H. M. Government wish to be satisfied that they will not be compelled upon to implement a policy which would involve them single-handed in such commitments, and in the course of joint examination they wish to ascertain to what extent the

U. S. Government would be prepared to share the resulting military and financial responsibilities."

With a view to bring about compromise between the Jews and Arabs, the British Foreign Office announced on August 26, 1946 that the conference with Jewish and Arab representatives would open on September 9, 1946. On the same day Jamal Hussein, Vice-Chairman of the Arab Higher Executive accepting the invitation stated that all five members of the Arab Executive including the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem should be invited. This request was not accepted by the British Government. After unavailing last minute attempts by King Ibn Saud and by King Abdullah of Transjordan to persuade the Palestine Arabs to send representatives to London, the conference opened at Lancaster House on September 9, 1946, delegates of the Arab League but not of the Palestinian Arabs or of the Jewish Agency being present.

It will be remembered that at the beginning of a two-day debate in the House of Commons on Palestine, Mr. Herbert Morrison announced on July 31, 1941 that the British Government had informed the U. S. Government of their willingness to accept as the basis for negotiation the principal recommendation of the report which envisaged the setting up of an Arab and a Jewish province, both enjoying a large measure of autonomy under a central Government which would have exclusive authority as to defence, foreign relations, customs and excise, and initially the administration of law and order. The plan also provided for the establishment of a district of Jerusalem and a district of the Nageb. The Arab representatives opposed the Morrison Plan and asked for the recognition of an independent Palestinian State not earlier than the end of 1948.

## Reference To The U.N.O.

The resumed Palestine Conference began in the last week of January, 1947. On February 7, 1947, the British Government made certain fresh proposals at the Conference which constituted the modified "Morrison five-year plan". Various Arab delegates declared specifically that further Jewish immigration into Palestine would lead to bloodshed in the Middle East. Dr. Jamali, Iraqi Foreign Minister, said that it would lead to "explosions throughout the Arab world". The Arab Memorandum rejected partition in all its forms. Mr. Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary then declared that the Palestinian issue will be referred to the U.N.O.

The whole problem is now before the United Nations General Assembly. The U. N. O. first began work on the question in spring of 1946 in a Special Session of the Assembly, continued it through the summer in its 11-nation Special Committee on Palestine, which visited Palestine and examined two solutions proposed by the majority and minority of the Committee. The Special Committee unanimously approved recommendations to terminate the British Mandate, to grant independence to Palestine and to set up a transitional authority under the United Nations. It recommended that economic unity be maintained, that the Government be organised on democratic principles, that minorities be protected, that the Government abide by the principles of the U. N. Charter and that steps be taken to relieve the plight of Jewish displaced persons in Europe.

The majority of the Special Committee recommended that Palestine be "partitioned" into Arab country, a Jewish country and a free city of Jerusalem under U. N. Trusteeship.

The Jewish state would include the coastal plain, where Jews make up the majority of the population, fertile Eastern Galilee and the arid uninhabited Nageb in the South. The rest of Palestine, which is largely Arab inhabited, make up the Arab State under the partition plan, 150,000 Jews would be admitted in the next two years and 60,000 per year in the remainder of the transitional period.

The Special Committee's minority recommended Federal Government, including an Arab State and a Jewish State. Under this plan the country would remain unified but Arab and Jewish minorities would live in their respective States. Immigration for the first three years would be permitted in such numbers as could be absorbed into the Palestinian economy. The absorptive capacity of the country would be determined by a nine-member International Commission, three of whose members would be nominated by the Arabs, three by the Jews and three by U. N. Both the minority and majority agreed in the necessity for maintaining free access to the religious shrines of the country.

The decision of the U. N. Sub-Committee released to the Press on November 19, 1947, had the support of both Russia and America. The new plan which had finally been recommended to the General Assembly for adoption proposed the appointment of a Commission of five nations, urging Guatemala, Poland, Norway and Iceland to carry out the administration during the transitional period and the establishment of provisional Governments in the proposed Arab and Jewish States. The plan fixed the dead-line for the withdrawal of the British troops at August 1, 1948 and the date on which two States will obtain independence at October 1,

1948. Within two months of the Mandatory authority, to which the British Government had already agreed, the Provisional Government will hold elections to a Constituent Assembly. The states of Jerusalem—proposed as an independent city formerly—still remained to be decided.

The whole of the Muslim world is in revolt against the partition of Palestine and is preparing for war. The troops of Syria, the Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq and Transjordan are already massing on the borders of Palestine. After the partition voting in the General Assembly was over, Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, Leader of the Pakistan Delegation to the U.N.O., who made a remarkable speech before the Palestine Ad Hoc Committee and presided over Sub-Committee No. 2., appointed by the U.N. Special Committee, in a statement to the Press said, "Pakistan desires to wash its hands of all responsibility for the decision that has been taken. It will, therefore, take no part in the election of the U.N. Commission which will be set up to implement that decision". Condemning the backdoor manoeuvring for votes, Sir Muhammad in a Press interview at Karachi said, "It has demonstrated to the world that power-politics still dominate the field; only the methods and weapons have changed. It is a matter of great pity that the only matter of real importance on which the U.N.O. has recorded a decision should have demonstrated to the world by what currents and cross-currents the U.N.O. was taking decision on important matters. The manoeuvring that went on behind the scenes and the methods by which this decision to partition Palestine was secured, should have convinced the Eastern countries

that they still cannot hope to get a fair deal in international matters uninfluenced by extraneous considerations".

The challenge of the imperialists has been accepted by the Arabs. "We shall draw the swords from our sheaths", said Alhaj Amin-el-Husseini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, "and let them do the talking, for words are useless."

The Grand Mufti was not boasting. An actual war between the Arabs and Jews has already started in Palestine. While Britain is wedded to withdraw, there is now no hope that the withdrawal will be peaceful. According to the London "Times", "Civil administration is paralysed; Government offices and commercial establishments deserted by their Jewish and Arab staffs, have almost ceased to function; postal and telephone services are suspended; no civil airport is open to traffic". The U.S. Government has already withdrawn its support for partition. The efforts of the United Nations to arrange for a truce have failed. The most that can be hoped for, the neutral observers state, in the immediate future is that French proposals for an international volunteer Arab force to protect Jerusalem to which the Arab states have agreed, will be applied in time to save the Holy Places from outrages.

#### **(d) SYRIA AND THE LEBANON**

The world war overshadowed the political struggles in Syria and the Lebanon. After France declared war against Germany, Syria also followed suit and when France collapsed in June, 1940, General Mittelhauser, in agreement with M. Paux, the French High Commissioner, and after consultation with General Weygaund declared cessation of hostilities

on June 28, 1940. The Allies viewed this with concern and on July 1, 1940 the British Foreign Office issued the following statement: "H.M. Government understand that General Mittelhauser has stated that hostilities have ceased in Syria. H.M. Government assumes that this does not mean if Germany and Italy sought to occupy Syria or the Lebanon and were to try to do so in the face of the British Commander of the Sea, no attempt would be made by the French forces to oppose them. In order, however, to set at rest doubts which may be felt in any quarter, H.M. Government declare that they could not allow Syria or the Lebanon to be occupied by any hostile Power to be used as a base for attack upon those countries in the Middle East which they are pledged to defend or to become the scene of such disorder or to constitute a danger to those countries. They therefore hold themselves free to take whatever measures they may in such circumstances consider necessary in their own interests. Any action which they may hereafter be obliged to take in fulfilment of this declaration will be entirely without prejudice to the future status of the territories now under 'French Mandate'".

The pro-German policy of the Vichy Government forced Britain to occupy Syria, partly because of the mountainous terrain, but mainly for political reasons. After the fall of Crete, German infiltration into Syria increased and Vichy could not stop it. The British Government also issued a warning to the Vichy Government which was not heeded. On June 8, 1941, British, Australian, Indian and Fighting French forces, with strong air support crossed the Syrian frontier from Palestine and Transjordan. Sidon was captured on June 15, 1941 by Australians. Damascus fell on June 22, 1941. About this

date mechanised units advanced into Syria from Iraq. Deir-  
ez-zor was taken on July 3, 1941 by Indian troops. The  
Vichy French asked for an armistice, which was signed at  
Acre (Palestine) on July 13, 1941. According to the Treaty,  
the British right of occupation was recognised. The Vichy  
French troops were allowed to keep their personal arms and  
equipments and were given the choice of either being  
repatriated to France or of joining Fighting French Forces.

### **Declared Independent**

General Catroux, Commandar-in-Chief of the Free  
*French forces in Syria proclaimed, "I come to put an end to*  
Mandatory regime and to proclaim you free and independent.  
You will be henceforward sovereign and independent peoples,  
able to either form yourselves into separate states, or to unite  
into a single state. Your independent sovereign status will be  
guaranteed by a Treaty in which our mutual relations will be  
defined". Syria was declared a republic on September 6,  
1941. Formally recognising the independence of Syria a  
telegram of congratulations and good wishes was sent by the  
British King to Sheikh Tajuddin-el-Hussein, President of the  
Syrian Republic. British Minister in the person of General  
Spears was accredited to the two states. Finally an agree-  
ment was drawn up between Mr. Oliver Lyttleton and General  
de Gaulle, which attempted to define the British and French  
positions in the two countries, but the document was so  
ambiguously worded that it was interpreted in various ways.

There was a growing desire among the Syrians and the  
Lebanese to take what appeared to them the most opportune  
moment for getting rid of French domination before France



was once again strong, though they equally deplored the presence of foreign troops from which they were suffering due to the vagaries of French destiny. The French authorities as usual resorted to delaying tactics in implementing their promises. After many delays the elections for the new Syrian and Lebanese Governments were organised in January, 1943. In Syria the extremists were returned in an overwhelming majority though in the Lebanon, it is stated, the general issue was less clear. In October 1943 the Lebanese Chamber passed laws to eliminate the French. This however infuriated the French authorities. With few exceptions, all Lebanese Cabinet Ministers were arrested on November 12, 1943. Emile Iddle was appointed new Prime Minister. Serious disturbances broke out at Beirut and Tripoli. The Lebanese police refused to obey orders and Martial Law was proclaimed. An agreement was signed with the Syrian and the Lebanese Governments for all legislative and administrative functions. On December 20, 1943, most of the former French officials were arrested.

A wave of indignation swept the two countries and uproarious demonstrations were staged at important political centres. This did not remain confined to the Lebanon and Syria but it had its reverberations in other Allied countries. Actual resistance was decided upon by the Syrian nationalists, and it was with great difficulty that they were persuaded to refrain from resorting to such drastic steps. Diplomatic pressure was also exerted on the French of National Liberation which consequently recalled the French Delegation General and sent General Catroux to release the imprisoned Government. With a view to conciliate the Nationalists, General Catroux once more publicly affirmed the French

Government's intention to end the Mandate and to guarantee to the States their full independence. While a settlement seemed to stand within the realms of possibility the talks broke down over the question of the transfer of the national armies, better known as "Troupes Speciales". "The French", wrote a commentator on foreign affairs, "were unwilling to part with military control until their special position in the cultural, economic and strategic spheres was assured. Since neither state was willing to accord to the French any privilege which could not also be given to Great Britain, the United States, Russia and the other Allied countries who had so far acknowledged their independence, an impasse was reached. British mediation was attempted at the request of both sides but failed to find an acceptable solution".

With a view to evolve out some other acceptable formula, the French Delegation General proceeded to Paris for consultation. It was believed in Arab circles that he would return soon to explore possibilities for further settlement. The expected did not happen. For reasons unknown, he had to prolong his stay in France. It heightened the suspicion of the Syrian and the Lebanese and the alleged evasion of the French Government was severely condemned in the nationalist press. Confusion became worse confounded when the return of the Delegation General was preceded by the arrival at Beirut of a French Cruiser bringing Senegalese troops. When tension in the country reached an abnormal point, the French Delegation General returned back to Paris for consultations. It was subsequently announced that the transfer of the Troupes Speciales for which the nationalists were agitating since July, 1944, was agreed to by the French authorities, provided the nationalists accepted other proposals.

## French Repeat Blunders

Meanwhile the French repeated their blunders which aggravated the troubles beyond measure. They added fuel to the fire by sending another French Cruiser with troops on board. Protesting against this a joint statement on May 21, 1945 by the Syrian and the Lebanese Foreign Minister, Jamil Mardam Bey and M. Henri Pharaon declared that the despatch of French troops without the consent of Syria and the Lebanon constituted an infringement of the sovereignty of those countries and was incompatible with their independence, that they had decided not to enter into negotiations with the French and that all responsibility for the situation rested with France. Replying to the joint statement, M. Bidault on May 29, 1945 said, "Syria and the Lebanon are juridically placed under a Mandate to France by the League of Nations. France while awaiting an international decision that will permit her to renounce this mandate, has recognised the complete independence of Syria and the Lebanon. She has reserved to herself only the right to keep there the number of troops needed for the maintenance of order. France plans to crown her recognition of the independence of those countries with the withdrawal of all her troops from their territories, but wish in the meantime to settle with the Syrian and Lebanese Governments a number of questions she considers essential. She first wishes to make sure that her cultural interests will be safeguarded in these countries of French influence, where she has founded many schools. The statutes, freedom and rights of those establishments must be recognised and protected after her troops have left. She also desires agreements with Syria and the Lebanon to guarantee her economic

interests there. By the terms of the treaty that ended the war in 1918, France received an important share of the Mosul oil. The oil is shipped to France by tanks loaded in Syria, which is crossed by a pipe-line whose protection must be ensured. Finally France intends to guard her strategic interests. She must be sure that she can use her air bases on the route from France to the Far East, and that her warships can be put into certain ports".

During this period the situation became very threatening. It was reported that the French surprised and anxious at the turn which events were taking made a display of force in "all towns in Syria, and particularly in Damascus. The superior armament of the French was turned upon the city, and a desultory bombardment, accompanied by heavy machine-gun fire followed and lasted for three days. Fighting also began in the other Syrian towns, where the French made use of artillery, mortars and some bombing in an attempt to restore order. But the country was up. Bedouins poured into the Northern cities by the thousands with offers of help to the Government. Isolated French garrisons were attacked, and the loyalty of the locally raised units weakened. On May 31, 1945 the Commander-in-Chief of the Middle East was reported to have received instructions to suppress the prevailing disorder and chaos. The British troops accordingly marched on June 1, 1945 into Syria, and after overcoming heavy odds succeeded in separating the combatants. The British intervention was welcomed in Arab circles. The Egyptian Premier Nokrashy Pasha expressed gratitude to Britain for intervening in Syria and bringing the bloodshed in Damascus to an end. Sheikh Youssef, Saudi Arabian

Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs described the French action as "a savage and criminal assault aimed not only at the people of Syria but at the heart of every Arab."

### **Foreign Troops Evacuate**

The gradual deterioration in the situation compelled both the French and the British Governments to make a fresh approach to the problem. After protracted negotiations a declaration was made on December 13, 1945 to the effect that an agreement had been arrived at. Under this agreement "the withdrawal of both British and French troops for Syria was to be arranged at an early date. In the Lebanon there was to be a regrouping of French troops, pending a decision of the United Nations Organisation on the security requirements of that part of the world. There was a general reference to a common Anglo-French policy in the Middle East, and the need to ensure that sufficient forces were available in Syria and the Lebanon for security". Hostile demonstrations were again staged by the people, the reverberations of which echoed with great shrill in Soviet Russia, India and other Allied countries. On January 6, 1946, the Soviet Radio broadcast the unanimous decision of the Syrian Parliament to protest to the United Nations Organisation against the Anglo-French hostile attitude and against forces remaining in their territory. Earlier a meeting of a National Congress held at Beirut on January 2, 1946 drew up a note to the Lebanese President, saying that the Agreement was a violation of the Lebanon's independence and that "the maintenance of international order in this part of the world is the duty of the U.N.O. and not of any separate State".

On February, 5 the Lebanese and Syrian delegates to the General Assembly of the U.N.O., M.H. Frangie and El-Khoury sent the following joint note to Mr. Trygve Lie, the Secretary-General, on behalf of their Governments drawing the Security Council's attention to the presence of British and French troops in the Levant States. When the matter was discussed at the Security Council in February, 1946, both British and French policies towards the Levant were put to severe criticism. M. Vyshinsky, who strongly supported the Syro-Lebanese request said that the Franco-British agreement of December 13, 1945 concluded without the consultation or participation of Syria and the Lebanon, was a violation of the two States' sovereignty. "Search the agreement" he added, "with a microscope, a telescope or what you will, and you will see no sign of good will expressed in the text. You see only algebraical formulae and abstract promises which cannot be expected to satisfy any one from any point of view". The debate was followed by good results. A joint announcement in London and Paris on March 4, 1946 stated that British and French military delegations, meeting in Paris, had agreed on a plan for the simultaneous withdrawal of British and French troops from Syria and the Lebanon, commencing on March 11, 1946 and scheduled for completion by April 30, 1946.

After desperate and hard struggle both Syria and the Lebanon have almost got rid of the foreign yoke, Syria has secured an honourable place in the comity of nations by being elected to the Security Council of the U.N.O. in November, 1946. Lebanon too has achieved its destiny. Both the States are not only opposed to the domination by the Western Powers but also to that of the strong Arab States.

It is why they are also opposed to the "Greater Syria" scheme sponsored by the Transjordan ruling class. "We would", said Riaz-el-Soleh, former Lebanese Premier on November 29, 1946, "shed our blood for independence within the present frontiers as recognised by the Arab League and the United Nations. We should dismiss with contempt the Greater Syria Scheme."

### (e) TRANSJORDAN

During the war of 1939-45, Britain exploited Transjordan to the fullest extent. It turned her into the Middle East bastion by building a great number of aerodromes and landing fields, expanding the port of Aqaba on the Red Sea, and laying a ramified network of roads. According to the Teheran "Mardom", the actual master of the situation in the country was a British Army officer named Glubb, who was given the title of Pasha and who headed the Transjordan Arab Legion. He became the virtual ruler of Transjordan and of the tribes of Northern Arabia and the Syrian desert. When the Allies suffered reverses in the early years of war, signs of discontent were visible in Transjordan as in some other Arab countries. The British Government considered it expedient to give certain assurances to Transjordan nationalists with a view to buy off Arab opinion against the Fascist propaganda. It was alleged that post-dated concessions were given in the hope of finding means for retaining the reality of power by sacrificing its external trappings.

The vigorous agitation launched after the cessation of hostilities in Arab countries forced the British Foreign Minister, Mr. Bevin, to declare in the General Assembly of the United Nations of January 17, 1946 regarding Transjordan

that it was the intention of the British Government to take steps in the near future for establishing this territory as a sovereign independent State and for recognising its status as such. In these circumstances, the question of Transjordan going under trusteeship did not arise". Soon afterwards it was announced in London that the Anglo-Transjordan talks had begun, and on March 22, 1946 the treaty was signed by Mr. Bevin and Mr. Creech-Jones, British Under-Secretary for the Colonies, on the one hand and by Ibrahim Pasha Hashim, the Premier of Transjordan on the other.

### **The Treaty**

The treaty stated that Britain recognised Transjordan as a fully independent State, with the Emir (H.H. Abdulla Ibn Hussein) as its sovereign, that there will be "perpetual peace and friendship between the two countries", that there shall be a close alliance, and full and frank consultation on all matters of foreign policy affecting their common interests, and that neither country will adopt in foreign relations an attitude inconsistent with the alliance. In the event of a dispute with a third State which was likely to endanger international peace and security, Britain and Transjordan would act together to seek a solution by peaceful means as provided in the United Nations Charter.

Should either country be involved in hostilities as a result of armed attack by a third country, the other will give immediate aid as a measure of collective self-defence and in the event of imminent danger of hostilities both parties will consult together on defensive measures. Britain, in accordance with the treaty was also to make available to



Transjordan the services of army experts, officials, and technicians which that country may require. The treaty provided for negotiations for a commercial agreement and stated that neither country will extend to the nationals in the commerce of the other treatment less favourable than that accorded to the most favoured foreign country.

The Treaty roused divergent comments. Imperialist commentators claimed that Britain thus completed her mission as the Mandatory power, having granted Transjordan full independence and thereby created the pre-requisites for her entry into the United Nations Organisation as a full fledged members. The Arabs have, however, given a cold reception to the Treaty. The Beirut newspaper Orient said "The Anglo-Transjordan agreement.....is an obstacle in the way of all the Middle East countries, which are striving for full independence and freedom from foreign influence and want to organise outside of imperialistic blocks". The Arab politicians were reported to have seen a direct threat to peace in the fact that Transjordan by granting Britain strategic positions was becoming a stepping stone to the colonisation of the Arab countries and opening wide opportunities for British expansion in that quarter. Equally severe was the criticism of the Treaty from U.S.A., Senator Pepper, said, " In my opinion it is merely another way by which a big country exploits little countries and it is absolute antithesis to the principle and philosophy of the United Nations.....The British Mandate should have been revoked long ago because it was never carried out in accordance with the Mandate spirit. Surely the United Nations are at present the juridical heir of the League of Nations and every League of Nations Mandate should be revoked and redispensed of by the United Nations."

Commenting on the Treaty "New Times", a Soviet journal wrote, "Thus, we have before us an unmistakable desire to decide the fate of Arab countries behind their backs and to thoroughly re-draft the map of the entire Middle East, in order to help consolidate British hegemony and to benefit reactionary circle associated with Britain. Viewed from the angle of these projects, the plans made for the maintenance in Transjordan territory of a permanent corps of 40,000 Polish mercenaries recruited from among the inveterate pro-fascist elements of Ander's army acquire particular significance. Emir Abdullah and General Anders are now negotiating on this score. The establishment of Transjordan armed forces of this kind would signify the setting up of a most dangerous hot-bed of unrest and provocation in all of the East Mediterranean area".

### **What Next ?**

The recent pronouncements of the Emir of Transjordan have caused further controversy. When the Emir visited London, in March 1946, it was reported that his talks with the British Government dealt also with the joining of the greater part of Palestine to Transjordan, in other words, the partition of Palestine into two States, and the prospect of uniting Syria to an Iraq-Transjordan State. The British Government are stated to have approved all the questions, Emir Abdullah posed. This is confirmed by the speeches of the Emir and their favourable reception in Britain's Conservative Press. The Arabs, however, are viewing the Emir's attitude with concern. Speaking in a debate on November 24, 1946, in which several deputies attacked recent references to "Greater Syria" in a speech from the Throne by Emir Abdullah

in which he said that Transjordan was willing to join the union with Iraq or any other member-state of the Arab League, the Syrian Prime Minister, Mr. Saadullah Jabry told the Chamber of Deputies, that "Syria refuses to join any union, which is not based on national dignity and sovereignty and rejects any tendency not in conformity with a republican constitution "

As a result of the application made by the Transjordan Foreign Minister, Mr. Shureiki for his country's admission to the U.N.O. on July 8, 1946, Transjordan was made a member of the U.N.O. in November, 1946. Her sovereignty was acknowledged by all nations. In January 1946 Emir Abdullah succeeded in concluding a pact with Turkey which has further enhanced her prestige in the Middle East.

Emir Abdullah has succeeded this year in getting his treaty with Britain revised. The new Anglo-Transjordan Treaty, while still envisaging the formation of a joint board of British and Transjordan military representatives to coordinate defence policy, discards those features of the older Treaty of 1946 which were considered incompatible with full sovereignty. An Annex provides that, until it is agreed "that the state of world security renders such measures unnecessary", Emir Abdullah will invite Britain to maintain R.A.F. units at Amman. There are, however, no extra-territorial privileges at such airfields, which remain under Transjordan command. There is no provision for stationing British land forces in Transjordan in time of peace, but they are to have full transit facilities, and British operational units are to engage in joint training operations with the Transjordan armed forces "for a sufficient period in each year."

**(f) SAUDI ARABIA**

The growing power of Saudi Arabia, as a result of the Saudi-Egyptian and Saudi-Iraqi treaties on the eve of the second World War, was welcomed by all well-wishers of the Muslim States. To Britain it was advantageous that so dominant a position in the Arab world should be in the hands of a ruler so well-disposed to her as Ibn Saud. It had ensured the security of sea and air routes which were so essential for the maintenance of the British empire. The Fascist menace throughout the war presented itself to Britain. It appeared first when the Italo-Yemeni Treaty was renewed in 1937 and the Imam was consequently presented with a gratuity of armaments of different kinds. More disturbing was the anti-British propaganda launched by Italy in Arabic from the Bari Broadcasting Station. The British diplomats however concluded the Anglo-Italian agreement in 1938 by which the danger was warded off. By this agreement both parties pledged not to acquire a privileged position of a political character in Saudi Arabia or the Yemen, and they declared in their common interest that no other power shall seek to do so. They promised not to intervene in any internal conflict in this region, and to "refrain from propaganda injurious to each other". The Iraqi-Saudi relations became more intimate when General Nuri Pasha, Iraqi Foreign Minister visited King Ibn Saud for establishing their friendly relations. The Saudi-Arabian Legation in Cairo announced on December 29, 1940 that a plot was discovered in Mecca against King Ibn Saud and his regime. It became later known that the leader was Sharif Abdel Hamid, who visited Berlin in 1939.

Throughout the war Ibn Saud kept his country nominally neutral, although openly favourable to the cause of the United

Nations. On February 19, 1942, Mr. Richard Law, British Foreign Under-Secretary in a Parliamentary reply in the House of Commons said that the British Government had recently requested the Saudi Arabian Government to withdraw Italian Legation from Jedda, that Saudi Arabia had acceded to this request and that Italian Minister and his staff left Jedda for Italy on February 8, 1942. The Anglo-Saudi relations became firmer as a result of some more treaties. An agreement for "friendship and neighbourly relations" between the British Government, acting on behalf of the Sheikdom of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia was announced in London on August 11, 1942.

It laid down that "permanent peace and inviolable friendship" would exist between the Saudi and Kuwait territories, and provided for the appointment by the Saudi Government of frontier officers to prevent marauding raids over the border by Bedouin bands. On October 1943, the British Foreign Office further announced that the British and Saudi Governments had exchanged Notes making the Treaty of Jedda automatically renewable for successive seven years period unless either party gave notice of denunciation not less than six months before the expiry of the period. The Treaty, signed in 1937, placed Anglo-Saudi relations on a basis of friendship and goodwill, and was originally valid for seven years. On October 3, 1936 the Treaty was modified, the right of either party to denounce it at six month's notice being abolished for seven years period which ended on October 3, 1943. The new exchange of Notes placed Anglo-Saudi relations on a more stable basis. On September 9, 1943, Saudi Arabia declared war on Germany and Japan.

## Oil Rivalry

The United State's project to build a 1200-mile pipeline across the Saudi Arabia to the Mediterranean stirred many a nest of hornets in the Allied financial world. The equanimity of British financial magnates was so much disturbed that their statesmen were forced to join hands in protest and it was only the intervention of high American dignitaries that saved an open rupture in Anglo-American alliance. The fact that the U.S. Government stuck inspite of the opposition of the British Government and big business and certain of its own financial experts, to a project estimated to cost between 130 and 165 million dollars, showed that more than commercial interests were involved in this project. It appeared that the said project had a definite place in the future expansion of American world trade and domination. As Ickes, the U.S. Petroleum Administrator for War put it in the 'American' the "capital of oil empire is on the move to the Middle East. The U.S. should better go into that empire in a big way, and fast".

Production of oil from the Saudi Arabian oil-fields had only just begun when the war broke out. According to the U.S. Bureau of Mines it reached 5,365,000 barrels in 1940, compared with 3,434,000 barrels in 1939 and 495,000 in 1938. Since early 1941, however, shortage of equipment held up further progress, and in both 1941 and 1942 Arabia's oil production remained slightly below 6,000 barrels. The shortage of oil throughout the world considerably increased the importance of Arabian oil-fields. The American Press in the middle of 1943 strongly urged that the Near Eastern oil resources should be exploited to a greater extent in order

to ease the strain on U.S. wells. The Saudi Government in the hope of making enormous profits welcomed such proposals and in October, 1943 sent a diplomatic mission to U.S.A. "to discuss the full scale development of their country's immense oil resources". A visit was also paid by Major-General Royce, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Forces, Middle East to Ibn Saud in December 1943, with the Commander-in-Chief were several experts from the great Caltex Oil Co, to whom the Saudi Government had granted concessions previously. These visits received adverse comments from the British Press. The struggle for oil in Arabia was characterised as part of the general game for capitalistic grab and evolution of new American imperialism. Despite this the American demand for oil gradually became more serious. Ickes reporting a decrease in domestic reserves and an increasing demand outlined a programme which involved a stimulating search for additional domestic sources and stock piles at strategic points all over the world for emergency.

The case of Ickes was underlined and elaborated by the Truman Congressional Committee in a report which stated "The U.S. have provided upwards 85 per cent of the aviation gasoline used by the United Nations and currently producing about seventy per cent of all the petroleum used by the United Nations". The report further suggested to the Allies particularly Great Britain to transfer to the U.S.A. proved reserves of oil in such volume as would compensate for "excessive depletion" of American reserves through war demands. The proposals of Ickes raised a storm of opposition in the United Kingdom, which however later on subsided due to the successful outcome of discussions in Washington between a group of interests representing the U.S. and U.K.

The U.S.A. Government also submitted to the British Government proposals for an advisory joint Anglo-American Petroleum Commission and a multi-lateral petrol agreement. The Anglo-American Oil Agreement concluded in September, 1945 undoubtedly facilitated the further penetration of American capital into the Middle East. Essentially, the Americans gained what they had been striving for so many years—the principle of "open door" and equal opportunity. After the signing of this agreement, Ickes declared that it will protect American interests in the fabulous oilfields in the Middle East and result in the removal of restrictions which have made it difficult for us to operate in Saudi Arabia in the past. Both the American and the British Press carried reassuring agreement that this agreement should not culminate rivalry and friction between Britain and the United States.

Ibn Saud's relation with the British Government remained most cordial throughout when the delicate negotiations on oil were being handled. The Allies had also held him in great esteem. On the morning of February 17, 1945 the British Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill travelled to an hotel in oasis of Fayoum, about fifty miles from Cairo, to meet Ibn Saud who had arrived in Egypt for Jedda on an American destroyer and accompanied by his two sons the Emir Mansour, Saudi Arabian Defence Minister and the Emir Mohammed. Mr. Churchill accompanied by Mr. Eden had an hour's private conversation with the King through an Arab interpreter, later lunching with him and exchanging gifts. President Roosevelt prior to meeting Mr. Churchill at Alexandria also had conversations with Ibn Saud on board an American cruiser in the Suez Canal area.



## Arab World

King Ibn Saud has always displayed unusual interest in the affairs of other Arab countries and may be regarded as one of the promoters of the Arab League. Of late his relations with King Farouk of Egypt have become most friendly. In January 1945 King Farouk visited Saudi Arabia when he was given a very enthusiastic reception. The two monarchs had informal conversations on questions of Pan-Arab co-operation and exchanged gifts. A year after in January, 1946 Ibn Saud paid a state visit to King Farouk. During his stay he held discussions with Farouk, the Prime Minister *Nokrashy Pasha and members of the Egyptian Government*. On January 16, 1946 the two Kings issued the following statement, "We associate ourselves with all Muslim Arabs in their belief that Palestine is an Arab country, and that it is the right of its people and the right of Muslim Arabs, everywhere to preserve it as an Arab land. All the efforts of the Arab Kings, heads of Governments and peoples in support of the Palestinian Arabs were made to maintain the principle of justice. We confirm the constitution of the Arab League, which is that each country has the right to decide its own future and enjoy independence. We desire our Governments and peoples to go forward on the path of unity, to enter into agreements, create a rapprochement between them and make their relations closer. The object of the Arab League was to create co-operation for the benefit of the Arab peoples. We desire that our League may always give an example of co-operation between a group of parties to maintain their security, liberty and independence. Our intention is to cooperate with all the nations of the world on a basis

of right, justice and permanent peace. Our League will never think of being an aggressor against another nation".

Ibn Saud possesses a burning desire that Arabs should get their homeland in Palestine. He has been urging upon the British Government towards this end since he rose into power. When Jemal Husseini led a delegation of Palestinian Arabs to King Ibn Saud, the latter reiterated the same views. The King of Saudi Arabia declared, "The question of the Arabs and Palestine is a question for Islam, all Arab countries including my own". The solution depended on Arab League to which all nations must rally. "My brother Farouk and I", he added, "are with the League with all our strength. What Farouk ratifies I ratify and what I ratify Farouk ratifies".

### (g) IRAQ

The developments in the Middle East particularly in Palestine had an effect on Iraqi mind as well. Palestine, as it is well known, was in those days the focus for practically all anti-British feelings. In Iraq it is said to have destroyed all the friendly feelings towards Britain that the Anglo-Iraqian Treaty had gained. Meanwhile a change in the Ministry took place. The Iraqi Cabinet under Nuri-es-Said resigned on March 31, 1939 and a new Cabinet under Sayyid Rashid-ul-Gailani was formed on the same day. Nuri-es-Said was appointed as Foreign Minister. The 'Times' correspondent reported that no change in policy was implied in the appointment of the new Cabinet. It was stated that General Nuri-es-Said resigned in order that he might devote his attention to foreign affairs.

That Nuri-es-Said whole-heartedly cooperated with Rashid Ali's Government is proved by the fact that the former

headed an Iraqi delegation which visited Saudi Arabia in April 1940. A statement issued by the Saudi Arabian Legation in London declared that discussions between the delegation and the King, Crown Prince and the Saudi Foreign Minister had resulted in complete agreement on all points.

When war was declared in 1939 Iraq stood loyally by the terms of the Treaty and until April 1941, she was asked to implement them to the full. A reaffirmation of Iraq's adherence to the Anglo-Iraqi alliance was made by the Prime Minister, Sayyid Rashid-el-Gailani in the Senate on January 7, 1941. Denying that Britain had approached Iraq and requested her to do more than was provided for in the Treaty of Alliance, he declared that Iraq's traditional policy of friendship and alliance with Britain would remain unchanged, expressed the hope that the Cabinet were unanimous on questions of foreign policy and concluded, "Iraq is a completely independent state. She required her independence when British strength was at its maximum, thanks firstly to the sacrifices borne by Iraq during the outbreak of rebellion in 1920 which was part of the general Arab revolt, secondly to the great personality of the late King Faisal, and thirdly to the nobility and political wisdom of the British people, who readily appreciated that Iraq was fit for independence. Any policy inconsistent with Iraq's traditional policy is not in the true interests of the country".

The gradual deterioration in the British Iraqi relations may be ascribed to various causes. Miss Freya Stark, an eminent author who was then serving as an official of the British diplomatic corps, gives us first-hand information of the conditions then existing in Iraq and the causes which

led to the revolt of Rashid Ali. Miss Stark thinks that it was inevitable that the German cry should have succeeded for a time. Subsidiary causes depressed the prestige of Britain. The failure to develop armaments according to her treaty, due to her tardy armament and not her fault, helped to discredit her with the Iraqi Army which later on became the sole arbiter of politics in the lands. By 1941, when France had capitulated and the whole continent of Europe lay in German hands, it was too late. The Middle East, with few exceptions, was anxiously asking itself whether it had not backed a loser. Belief in a British victory was largely a matter of faith unsupported either by military successes or a propaganda sufficiently necromantic to achieve results without them.

## **Rashid Ali**

When British representations were made to Iraq to break off diplomatic relations with Italy, Rashid Ali refused to accede to the request with the result that the Italian Minister continued to remain accredited in Baghdad. Syed Rashid Ali resigned the Premiership on January 31, 1941 and was succeeded by General Taha-el-Hashimi, Minister of War, who, was equally unsuccessful in persuading his colleagues to break off relations with Italy. On April 3, 1941 in the temporary absence of the Regent, Abdullah, and during the Parliamentary recess, Rashid Ali, with the assistance of high officers of the Iraqi army, carried out a coup d'etat and again assumed the Premiership, forcing General Taha el Hashimi to resign. On the following day General Amin Zaki, Chief of the General Staff declared that the Regent had "for some-time disregarded the duties incumbent upon the Regency,

going so far as to cause allegiance to himself, thus challenging the throne which had been entrusted to his care and working against the interests of the Army and of national unity". On April 6, 1941 in a broadcast Rashid Ali declared that the army had entrusted him with responsibility for the "preservation of peace and order and the safeguarding of the constitution" and that his Government would carry out all international obligations, "especially the Anglo-Iraqi treaty in the spirit of friendship and cordiality".

On April 11, 1941, the Iraqi Parliament summoned by the new Government passed a resolution dismissing Abdul Illah, uncle of the six-year old boy-king Faisal from the Regency and electing in his place another member of the Hashimite family, Sharif Sharaf, who was to officiate until the King had attained majority. The former Regent was forced to fly from Baghdad to Basra. The Iraqi coup coincided with the arrival of the new British Ambassador, Sir Kinahan Cornwallis. Exactly the same day on May 2, 1941 when Rashid Ali gave an ultimatum to the British at Habbaniyah, the Soviet Union accepted the Iraqi offer the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The Tass Agency however pointed out that a similar offer was made to the U.S.S.R. at the end of 1940 when Rashid Ali was Premier, before his supersession by General Taha-el-Hashimi conditional on Soviet recognition of the Arab countries as a whole. This, the Agency reported, the Soviet then refused to do, though maintaining a positive attitude to the question of diplomatic relations, and when the second Iraqi offer was made on May 2, 1941 unaccompanied by the previous condition it was accepted.

## Rebellion

It was announced in London on May 2, 1941 that the concentration of the Iraqi troops at Habbaniyah, an R.A.F. Station 60 miles west of Baghdad, had led to a clash with the British forces stationed there. The statement recalled that when Rashid Ali, supported by certain army leaders, seized power by force a month ago, he publicly announced his intention of honouring the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance. Consequently when British Government notified their desire to open the line of communication through Iraq for British forces in accordance with arrangements made with the Iraqi Government a year ago, he agreed to this action and troops landed at Basra without incident. When, however, some days later a further contingent was notified, the Iraqi authorities declared that they were unwilling to grant permission for further British troops to arrive in the country before those who had already arrived had passed through. British insistence on their treaty rights and the landing of further troops at Basra was followed by a menacing concentration of Iraqi troops around Habbaniyah, and the local Iraqi Commander conveyed to the British Officer Commanding at that place a provocative message that no flights or troop movements would be permitted under threat of bombardment. Representations of the British Ambassador to secure the withdrawal of Iraqi troops were disregarded when the clash came between the Iraqi army and the R.A.F. at Habbaniyah. Basra was already peacefully in British hands. The deposed Regent Abdul Illah, meanwhile, issued a strong appeal to the Iraqi people from Palestine on May 3, 1941. With the British forces within five miles of Baghdad a committee of four was formed in the capital under the Lord Mayor to take control

of the city, and an armistice was requested from the British Commander. This was concluded on May 31, 1941, the truce applying to the whole of Iraq. Under the terms all Axis prisoners in the country would be interned and Iraqi prisoners handed over to the lawful Regent, Abdul Illah. The latter arrived in Baghdad after the conclusion of the armistice being granted by the Presidents of the Senate and Chamber and a number of civil and military officials opposed to Rashid Ali.

"Since that time", says Seton Lloyd, "there have been great changes in Iraq, and a most serious attempt has been made by British and Iraqis alike to eradicate not only the effects but the causes of the estrangement". On January 16, 1943 Iraq declared war on Germany, Italy and Japan.

Iraq's entry into the ranks of the United Nations gave great relief in London, where it was pointed out that it was the first time in history that an independent Arab State had declared war on the enemies of Britain.

The flight of Rashid Ali after Germany had collapsed roused lively interest. Rashid Ali, who had been condemned to death in Iraq as a traitor, reached Beirut in June 1945 from Marseilles as a stoker in the French s.s. "MARRAKASH". Mr. Bevin stated in the House of Commons on October 24, 1945 that he was reported to have travelled after the defeat of Germany from Austria to Brussels, Paris and Marseilles, that he was not listed as a war criminal but was a traitor to Iraq, and that he was satisfied that Rashid Ali had entered Saudi Arabia without either the permission or previous knowledge of the Saudi Arabian Government. King Ibn Saud

stated that he had never concealed his disapproval of the revolt but that he was unable to refuse him a sanctuary as a refugee. He said, "If our sister country (Iraq) demands that I should hand him over, I shall reply that he is sheltering under our protection and I would rather give up some of my sons instead."

### **Internal Troubles**

During the war, stringent security measures such as censorship, ban on formation of political parties and other restrictions on political activities had resulted in complete extinction of civil liberties. Great hopes were pinned on the victory of democracy in the war. It was believed that cessation of hostilities would be followed not only by the elimination of external control but also political emancipation within the country. It will be remembered that Iraq is governed by a Parliament with the King, the Parliament consisting of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. The Prime Minister is chosen by the King and other Ministers are appointed by the King on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. At the end of war Iraq's Prime Minister happened to be Al-Pachachi, who is alleged to have made no effort to restore the democratic freedoms. Frustration and disappointment consequently caught the minds of the people. To relieve rising discontent Regent Abdul Illah however addressed a meeting of Deputies and Senators on December 27, 1945.

The Pachachi Government was forced to resign on January 30, 1946. He was succeeded by Tewfic Al-Suweidi after a cabinet crisis lasting for about a month. After the assumption of office by Al-Suweidi, Iraq passed through a



brief period of reforms. All the security regulations were abolished and political parties were allowed to have a free-play. The application of some communities to form a National Liberation Party was, however, not granted.

The radical reforms effected by the Suweidi Government hurt the vested interests who hatched a plan to replace the Government. Their intrigues met with success when on May 30, 1946 another Government was formed headed by Senator Arshad Al-Umari, ex-Mayor of Baghdad to be of erratic and unbalanced personality. Though he gave an assurance that he would remain neutral till elections are held, he is alleged to have resorted to most objectionable methods to deprive people of their newly gained liberties. The issuing of warnings to six newspapers and suspension of six journals was merely a prelude to his campaign against progressive parties and papers. Public protests resulted in firings at Baghdad and Kirkuk involving several casualties of dead and wounded. Nuri-es-Said Pasha, the veteran Iraqi Leader, remained in power till Salih Jabr became Premier as a result of the elections held in March 1947. It was the new Premier who initialled the new Anglo-Iraqi treaty at Portsmouth on January 15, 1948. The treaty while affirming the importance of air bases as a link in the essential communications of Iraq and Britain provided for the formation of an Anglo-Iraqi Joint Defence Board consisting of British and Iraqi military representatives in equal numbers to act in a permanent joint advisory capacity for the co-ordination of defence matters. The treaty further laid down that until the peace treaties were concluded, the R.A.F. shall have free access to and use of the Habbaniya and Shaiba bases.

The treaty roused violent protests leading to clashes between students and police. A new Cabinet representing all the parties was formed on January 29 by Mohammed-el-Sadr who on February 4, 1948 announced that the Cabinet had decided to reject the treaty "since it did not realise Iraq's national aims".

## (h) I R A N

Reza Shah was realistic enough to see the weakness of his country and was determined to avoid Iran from the second World War, just as Turkey had done. An official declaration issued by the Iranian Government on September 6, 1939 stated that Iran would remain neutral in the European conflict and that she would defend her neutrality. On July 15, 1941 in a letter to the London 'Times' Mr. M. Mogaddam, the Iranian Minister in London further clarified the position. He wrote, (1) "The Government of Iran have declared the country's strict neutrality and are determined more than ever to preserve it in whatever set of circumstances or combination of circumstances that may arise. (2) No pressure or inducement of any kind has been brought to bear upon or offered to Iran by any foreign Government. The exercise of any such pressure or inducement will not be permitted by the Iranian Government, who are strong enough not to tolerate it, and such reports are mere illusions which reflect lack of knowledge and insight of the position of Iran. (3) The question of residence of all foreign nationals in Iran is governed by the laws and regulations in force in the country, and no foreigners, irrespective of their nationality are permitted, or are in a position to infringe such laws or to act in any way detrimental to the safety or the strict neutrality of Iran".

Despite the Iranian assurances, the Allied Military experts remained unsatisfied. After the declaration of war by Germany against Russia in 1941 they apprehended that if Germany were able to take over the Ukraine, she would then push on to the Persian Gulf. Both Russia and Great Britain became anxious to have a military occupation of Iran before it became too late. Preparations for Iran's occupation immediately started. Warnings were issued to Reza Shah to expel the Axis agents. The King assured that he would progressively expel all foreigners in the country. This was however not the desired object of the Allies. Reza Shah was dubbed as Fascist and British and Russian forces crossed the frontiers of Iran in the early morning of August 25, 1941 from the South and North.

In Turkey, the Ankara wireless declared that "Turkish public opinion regard the allegations set forth respecting Iran as incompatible with the ideas of right and justice. It is therefore only natural that Turkish public opinion should follow the incident from this point of view...Iran seeks to pursue no other policy but that of preserving her independence and integrity...The Turkish people hope that the possibility of settlement is not lost and that in that case goodwill be shown by our ally, Britain".

After a three days' token resistance the Government resigned. The new Iranian Premier, Ali Furanghi announced in the Majlis on September 6, 1941 that his Government had accepted the British and Russian demands consequent on the cessation of hostilities including the closing of the German, Italian, Hungarian and Rumanian Legations and the handing over to the Allies of enemy nationals, the withdrawal

of Iranian troops (a) South of a line rising from a point South of Lake Urina through Kazvin, Seman (East of Teheran) and Shahi and (b) East and North of a line Khaniqin to Bandar Dīlam on the Persian Gulf, payment by the Allies of occupation costs, granting by Iran of rails and roads facilities for transport of war supplies to the U.S.S.R. and continued payment of royalties by the Allies in respect of the British oil rights in the South and the Russian fishery concessions in the Caspian Sea in the North.

### **Crown Prince Succeeds**

On September 15, 1941 it was reported that the Majliss met in secret session and made demands for a number of internal reforms, and it was understood that a Parliamentary delegation would wait on the Shah the following day. On September 16, however, Teheran Radio announced that Reza Shah Pahlavi had abdicated the throne "on account of failing health and that the Crown Prince Mohammed Reza Khan, married to Princess Fawzieh, sister of King Farouk of Egypt had acceded to the throne. At an extraordinary Session of the Majliss it was declared that the new Shah would carry out his duties according to the "law of the constitution and in accordance with constitutional government".

On September 27, 1941 the Parliamentary deputies demanded that the ex-Shah should be brought to trial before he was able to escape from the country, and asked for an investigation into his accounts for the past twenty years and into the question of crown jewels, some of which were stated to be missing. The Municipality of Teheran alleged that the ex-Shah spent 350,000 rials amounting to £ 4,375,00 of its income on properties for his personal use, and a special

committee was set up to investigate this. A day after the ex-Shah embarked from Bundar Abbas on a mail boat for an unknown destination.

A number of internal reforms were announced in Iran during the last three months of 1941, including repeal of those articles of the 1924 constitution under which the monarch was made the Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Salaries of Government employees were increased from thirty to hundred per cent. The former monopolies of tea, sugar, cotton piece-goods and motor car spare parts, were suppressed and the price of opium was increased to curtail its consumption. It was also announced that an American Mission would visit Iran to undertake the reform of Iranian education. Assurances were given by Britain and the U.S.S.R.

As a result of growing unity with the Allies, the Iranian Government declared war on Germany on September 9, 1943 and on September 14 the Iranian Minister in the U.S.A. formally affixed his country's signatures to the Washington declaration, Iran thereby becoming the 33rd state to join the United Nations. The Iranian Premier, Al Soheily, explaining in the Majliss the reasons for the Government's decision, said that since the Anglo-Soviet-Iranian alliance in 1940, Germany had attempted to create agitation in Iran and, by exciting the tribes, dropping parachutists, and creating spy-centres, attempted in general to disturb the nation's security and upset the Government. A number of spies were seized by the British Intelligence and sentences of death and severe penalties imposed, while other Germans who formed espionage organisations in Khorasan were effectively suppressed by the Iranian military authorities.

A historic announcement was made regarding Iran at the Teheran Conference on December 1, 1943 by President Roosevelt, Marshal Stalin and Mr Churchill affirming the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran

### **Situation Worsens**

The relations of the Iranian Government with the Soviet Union worsened in the middle of the year 1944 as a result of the Russian demand for oil concessions in Iran. Replying to the accusations levelled by M Kavtzardze, the Soviet Vice-Commissar, Premier Saed after expressing regret at M. Kavtzardze's statement declared that the full extent of the Soviet demand was made known to his Government only after M. Kavtzardze had been in Iran for sometime, and that the Iranian refusal had been communicated to U S S R only after full consultation with the Cabinet and Majliss who still adhered to their opinion, the reasons for which were fourfold, viz , (1) so long as foreign troops were in Iran, public opinion would consider any concession as having been granted under duress, (2) the economic condition of the world was not clear, (3) the Washington Oil Conference had left the situation in doubt, and (4) all reports from Iranian representatives abroad urged that no concessions be granted until after the war. In conclusion he said that it should not be forgotten that the British and American companies had accepted the decision without complaint, and that the annoyance of Soviet representative was therefore groundless. On December 9, 1944, it was announced in Teheran that Mohammad Saed had resigned. On November 21, 1946 the Shah had entrusted Murtaza Qa'li Khan Reyatt

with the formation of a new government. On December 14, 1944, the Majliss passed a law providing that "no Premier or Minister may conduct official negotiations regarding oil concessions with official or unofficial representatives of any country or with representatives of oil companies or other persons or sign an agreement" except on pain of three to eight years solitary confinement and banishment for life from all Governmental posts.

While the question of oil concessions remained unsolved, fresh trouble brewed up when the Iranian Government after the end of European war demanded the evacuation of British, Russian and American troops. According to the terms of the Treaty of January 29, 1942, the Allied troops were to be withdrawn from Iran not later than six months after hostilities with Germany and her associates, including Japan, had ended. Though no official mention was made in the communique published after the Potsdam Conference it was understood that the Iranian request was under discussion between President Truman, Marshal Stalin, Mr. Churchill and Mr. Attlee. On June 28, 1945 it had been announced in Teheran that the British and U.S. military authorities had operating responsibility for the Trans-Iranian State Railway which played an important part in the overland supply route to Russia.

### **Azerbaijan**

Meanwhile the New Democratic (Tudeh) party, which had for long fostered a separatist movement and fomented risings and disturbances in the Azerbaijan province of Northern Iran, forming part of the Russian zone since the Anglo-Russian

occupation in 1941, broke into open rebellion against the Teheran Government on November 16, 1945.

The Tudeh (proletarian) party was formed in 1941 by a group of some fifty Iranians, many of liberal outlook but including a few Communists, who were among the political prisoners released after Reza Shah's abdication with the aim of carrying out extensive reforms. The movement assumed a particularly large scope in Iranian Azerbaijan in which live about a quarter of the entire population of Iran. Hitherto, the status of the population in the Iranian Azerbaijan was that of an oppressed nationality. Many of the new recruits of the Tudeh Party adventurers, of whom some were genuine Soviet-trained Communists, the party soon became all powerful in the Russian zone. Bitter attacks were made on the Central Government and the incorporation of Iranian Azerbaijan into Soviet Azerbaijan demanded. In September, 1945, the Tudeh party was suddenly superseded by the "New Democratic" party, which though adopting a less extreme programme for provincial autonomy within the Iranian State was completely under Russian domination. The Russians besides giving open encouragement to the Party's attacks on the Iranian Government, had earlier withheld permission for 200 Iranian soldiers to move into the province to suppress disturbances.

To the demand of the Azerbaijanese, the Iranian Government, then headed by Sadr and influenced by Seid Zia, gave the answers with cruel reprisals. Armed partisan detachments, the 'Fidai' formed by the Democratic Party of Iranian Azerbaijan, were disarmed by the police units and in November 1945, the National Assembly of Iranian Azerbaijan



was held in Tabriz. The assembly appealed to the Shah, the Majliss and the Iranian Government to grant Azerbaijanese national autonomy within the frame-work of the Iranian State. This request of the Azerbaijanese was turned down. The Government of Hakimi, who replaced Sadr, tried to dispatch to Azerbaijan additional troops to smash the movement. At the same time Seid Ziya's Teheran newspapers and some foreign newspapers urged Hakimi to suppress the Azerbaijanese movement by force of arms. They characterised the movement as a "separatist revolt" and an attempt on the part of the "Azerbaijanese to secede from Iran". In December, 1945 the National Majliss of the Iranian Azerbaijan elected on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot met in Tabriz. The Majliss set up a Government of Iranian Azerbaijan to carry out the vital democratic reforms as well as to regulate relations with the Iranian Government.

The Russian intervention in the internal affairs of Iran aroused a great deal of alarm in all the democratic countries of the world. The U.S. Government on November 24, 1945 sent a Note to the Russian and British Governments calling attention to the Teheran Declaration of 1943 and proposing the withdrawal of all foreign troops in Iran by January 1, 1946.

### **Qavam-es-Sultaneh**

In January 1946 a majority of the Iranian Majliss having realised that Hakimi's policy of violent opposition of Soviet Union was disastrous, came out in formation of a new Government to be headed by Qavam-es-Sultaneh. When Qavam came to power in February he made important

changes in the policy that upto then had been pursued by the Governments of Syed Sadr and Hakimi. In laying down this new road in the political life of the country the new Premier realised the inevitability of a struggle against the reactionary forces and the necessity for support from the progressive society. In his declaration made on June 6, Qavam said, "It goes without saying that for the sake of sacred aims and to ensure genuine liberty in the country, I shall rely on all progressive and patriotic elements in the country".

But when Qavam had assumed power in February, the Azerbaijan question still gave headache to the Iranian statesmen. Qavam soon started negotiations with Soviet Russia. On March 1, 1946 the following official comment was broadcast from Moscow: "On February 25, during conversations with the Iranian Prime Minister, Qavam-es-Sultaneh, he was informed of the decision of the Soviet Government that, with effect from March 2, Soviet troops would begin their evacuation of the areas of Meshed, Shahrud, and Samnan in Eastern Iran. The Soviet troops in the areas of Iran will remain there pending clarification of the situation". It was authoritatively stated in London that the last British troops left Iran on March 2, 1946. But to the utter surprise of all, the Soviet Union did not withdraw its troops from Iranian territory by March 2, 1946. It caused considerable international tension. On March 15, the Iranian War Minister, General Ahmad Ahmedi, announced that the Iranian Government would make a second appeal to the United Nations Security Council which was due to meet on March 25, 1946. The unanimous decision of the Security Council was to leave the Soviet Union and Iran to seek a settlement of their

dispute over alleged Russian interference in North Iran by bilateral negotiation. Meanwhile the Security Council retained the Russo-Iranian problem on its agenda until a satisfactory settlement was reached. On April 5, 1946, however, a Russo-Iranian agreement was announced in the following communique signed by Qavam-es-Sultaneh and M. Sadikov :—

“Negotiations which were begun by the Iranian Prime Minister in Moscow with Soviet representatives and continued in Teheran after the arrival of the new Ambassador, ended in Teheran on April 4, 1946. An agreement on the formation of a joint Russo-Iranian oil company and the conditions governing it will be proposed for approval by the Majliss within seven months from March 24. The question of Azerbaijan being an internal problem, the Iranian Government by taking into consideration the need of reforms under the present laws, will make the necessary arrangements with the people of Azerbaijan for a solution of the present difficulties”.

The progressive measures adopted by Qavam, especially the line he adopted of collaborating with the widest democratic circles in the country and also his establishment of normal friendly relations with the Soviet Union—all served to raise Iranian prestige in foreign circles. British diplomacy became particularly active in this field. As Michael Foot, British M. P., said in one of his articles British diplomacy refused to admit that the world was advancing and expected Iran to be kept eternally in its state of feudal poverty.

Immediately following concentration of British troops on the Iranian frontier specially in Basra other events took

place. The feudal reactionary separatist movement of the Arab Sheikhs in Khuzistan suddenly demanded annexation of Khuzistan to Iraq. An anti-Government conspiracy of the Bakhtiar and Kashkai Khans in Isfahan was discovered and insurrection of the Kashkai Khans took place.

The Teheran Telegraph Agency reported that Mozaffar Firuz, former Minister of Labour and Propaganda, citing documents in possession of the Government stated on September 13, 1946, at a Press conference that the anti-Government conspiracy in Isfahan had been prepared for the purpose of satisfying foreign interests and Mozaffar Firuz named a number of those arrested (Rashidyar Shirvani, Mortuza Quli Khan and others) who were well known for their connections with the British. On September 28, Reuter reported that Syed Hasan Taqizadah, the Iranian Ambassador in London demanded that the two British officials should be withdrawn. The demand did not lead to any result. The rebellion was however suppressed and a communique from Shiraz announced on October 17, 1946 that an agreement had been reached between central Government representatives at Shiraz and the tribal leader.

### **Oil Agreement Not Ratified**

As can be seen from reports in the Teheran Press on the agreement concluded on October 15, 1946 between the Iranian Government and the Khans, although those behind the events in Southern Iran did not manage to implement all their plans, they forced, according to Russian allegations, Qavam to reject, to some extent, the political course of collaboration with the Soviet-inspired organisations in the country which

he had adopted earlier. This according to the Soviet Press was proved not only by the formation of a new Government without participation of representatives of the People's Party and the Iran Party but also by numerous other reports. The Moscow Press bitterly criticised the formation of a new Cabinet by Qavam-es-Sultaneh on October 19, 1946.

Russia accused Britain and America of being behind Qavam's present "reactionary" policy but there was no definite evidence to support the charge. On the contrary it so appeared that Qavam-es-Sultaneh wanted to be master in his own house. Just as soon as he felt that more or less settled internal conditions made them possible, he ordered the general elections that had to precede the re-assembly of Parliament and national confirmation of the oil concessions, offered to Russia. Why Moscow Press and radio should have attacked him for dispatching Government troops to Azerbaijan, for the purpose of supervising the elections in that rebellious province is a mystery to neutral observers. The contention that Russian security would be endangered by fighting on the other side of the joint frontier was said to be fantastic. However, Qavam was not to be deterred from the course which he had set himself and soon after there was accord between Tabriz and Teheran, with Pisheveri of Azerbaijan in flight across the border. With the collapse of the Azerbaijan Democratic movement, the allied Tudeh Party which operated in the rest of the country went underground. From its peak of influence and popularity in the summer of 1946, when its leaders thought it possible even to win a leftist majority in Parliament, the party declined to the point of boycotting the elections on the grounds that voting will not be fair and honest.

One of the clauses of the Soviet-Iranian Agreement on oil concessions in Northern Iran, arrived at in April, 1946, stated that this commercial project should come before Parliament for ratification within seven months. There was then no Majliss in existence, because of the law that elections could not take place while foreign troops were in Iranian soil. Russia withdrew her forces. Qavam-es-Sultaneh duly began electoral preparations. Elections took place all over the country, slowly but steadily and Russia waited in silence and in patience. On August 12, 1947, M. Sadikov, the Soviet Ambassador in Iran presented the gist of his Notes suggesting that the time had come for the project of 1946 to be presented to the Majliss. "This was the signal, before Qavam-es-Sultaneh had even formed his new Cabinet" wrote London Times' Teheran correspondent "for the official Russian Press and wireless service to start their torrent of clumsy and ill-timed, but vitriolic abuse of the Shah, the Prime Minister, and other "reactionaries". In further interviews with the Ambassador, Qavam-es-Sultaneh was no longer requested to present this proposal to Parliament, which he had never refused to do, but was almost ordered to procure its early ratification. Whereas many deputies had previously been opposed to the agreement on economic and legal grounds (no foreign concession has ever been popular in this country) they now look askance at the proposed association rather than at the proposed contract".

The Soviet Ambassador's demarche was followed by much wrangling in the Majliss. Qavam-es-Sultaneh resigned and was renominated. The American Ambassador declared in regard to the oil demand that "America would defend Iran's freedom to make her own choice." The Majliss reject-

ed the 1946 agreement with the Soviet and demanded fresh negotiations.

M. Qavam-es-Sultaneh resigned on December 10, 1947 following the resignation of most of his Cabinet owing to disagreement over domestic policy. Ibrahim Hakimi was elected Premier on December 21, 1947. The announcement of the news that a U.S. Military Mission was to be appointed to assist the Iranian Government against foreign aggression evoked bitterest protest from Russia. On February 2, 1948, a Soviet Note charged the U.S. Military Mission in Iran with exerting a degree of influence which had resulted in the Iranian army "losing the character of an army of an independent sovereign state and converting" Iran into a military strategic base of the U.S.A. The Iranian Premier refuting the Russian charges stated on April 1, 1948 that Russia was interfering in Iran's internal affairs and creating trouble in Azerbaijan.

### (i) AFGHANISTAN

In 1934 Afghanistan joined the League of Nations and in 1937 signed the Saadabad Pact. On the eve of the outbreak of war every Great Power became anxious to purchase the friendship of Afghanistan. On July 19, 1939 Lord Zetland, British Secretary of State for India said, "A strong, stable and friendly Afghan administration has always been a British interest, and never more so perhaps than it is today".

Despite the expression of such fine sentiments, the British sympathy merely remained confined to words. Afghanistan needed substantial help, for its revenues were inadequate for defence. And in 1935 when the Afghan Government

sounded the British authorities, the latter were not prepared to offer more than a grant of export credits. The Germans had their opportunity. They took it. Then followed the usual Nazi programme, Technicians, teachers, and economic experts were sent to Kabul, a bi-weekly 'Lufthansa' air service via Teheran was set up. Machinery and plant of many descriptions were supplied on attractive terms. German special funds met a large proportion of the salaries of the experts. It is true that in August 1939, negotiations for a sterling loan of £ 5,000,000 was concluded with Britain but in 1940 it was a German who became a chairman of a Governmental Committee to study economic development. German enterprise took many forms. Hydro-electric installations were set up, one at Chak Wardak, 70 miles from Kabul, to supply the city, another at Pol-i-Khumsi, North of the Hindukush to provide power for factories. There was a broadcasting station at Kabul and German engineers were building numerous bridges. Germans were also active in the educational field. Young Afghans had been sent to Germany to be trained at German expense. German teachers scattered about the land had many opportunities of decrying the British.

### Neutrality Observed

Though no real help came from Britain, King Zahir Shah maintained excellent relations with the Governments of Britain and undivided India. Reasons of policy made them to refuse German offer when war broke out. There were about 150 Germans in the country who intensified their propaganda. The Germans had hoped that Kabul would encourage the frontier tribes to attack India and tie down



the Indian army to the border. The Indus frontier would be the reward given to Afghanistan. Tempting as was the offer, the Afghan Government chose to maintain strict neutrality. King Zahir Shah opening the Afghan Parliament on August 17, 1940 said that since the outbreak of the European War, Afghanistan had observed a strict policy of neutrality and that political and economic relations with the belligerent powers remained cordial. "The country, which had always followed a policy of independence, was inspired only by the desire to safeguard her national interests and to help in the establishment of peace and tranquility throughout the world. As war and its repercussions threatened nations with unnatural and unexpected circumstances, it was imperative that Afghans should prepare unitedly for the future," concluded the King.

It was announced from Kabul on October 19, 1941 that, in response to friendly representations by the British and Soviet Governments, the Afghan Government had agreed to the expulsion of Axis nationals from the country, the measure affected about 90 Germans and a few Italians. The Afghan Government who accepted the British offer for safe transit of the Axis nationals through India, declared that they regarded the action taken as part of their policy of neutrality. It was announced from Delhi on November 6, 1941 that arrangements had been made for the evacuation of 200 Axis nationals, mostly Germans, who were recently expelled from Afghanistan.

The Afghan contribution to the Allied cause during the second World War, is indeed very great. Those who may doubt this claim do not realise the magnitude of the

danger which even the temporary success of the Axis agents might have created. A powerful and threatening strategic position in the Near and Middle East would have fallen into German and Italian hands, Russian and British supplies of oil would have been imperilled. But there was another danger that of the utilisation of the inflammable human material on the North West Frontier of India to create a diversion which might well have taxed the military resources of the Government of India to the full. Had the Afghan Government chosen to fall in with German plans and received sufficient arms and munitions, an attack of Afghan troops on India might well have prevented India from sparing troops for East Africa, Egypt, Iran and Burma. Afghan neutrality was valuable to Britain in 1914-18. It was infinitely more valuable during 1939-45.

The Allied statesmen acknowledge the debt and have urged upon their respective States to show their appreciation of Afghan friendship. After the Axis agents were expelled from Afghanistan, the London 'Times' recognising the contribution wrote on October 21, 1941, "Afghanistan certainly possesses important mineral and agricultural resources, the exploitation of which has been relatively slow.....even in recent years. This has been due to lack of capital and to the primitive outlook of semi-naked tribesmen, who are a most important factor in Afghan internal politics. The poverty engendered by these conditions had been a source of the political unrest which in turn has helped to perpetuate them. Now that the Barakzai dynasty has restored order, kept the peace and embarked upon a programme of economic development, it is possible to survey the problem of economic aid to Afghanistan from a new standpoint. Provided the

stronger and richer Powers remember that the Afghans, from King to peasant, are most jealous of their newly-won independence, and provided it can dispel any suspicion that it is seeking political as well as economic advantages, there is much to be said for a policy based upon the belief of the stability of the Afghan Kingdom, a major British and Indian interest, and that it can best be furthered by economic assistance".

The relations with the Allied countries were also established on firmer footing. A friendship treaty was concluded with China on March 25, 1944. Diplomatic relations were secured with the United States of America much earlier. On July 5, 1946 the Afghan Prime Minister, Sardar Mahmud in a telegram to Mr. Trygve Lie declared that Afghanistan has long showed itself to be a peace-loving state devoted to the ideals of international co-operation for which the United Nations stands and made a formal application for membership and expressed the determination to accept the obligations contained in the U.N. Charter. The United Nations General Assembly met in plenary session and voted the admission of Afghanistan on November 9, 1946.

### **Soviet-Afghan Agreement**

The recent Soviet-Afghan Frontier Agreement concluded in June, 1946 has stirred lively speculations. The war's end has again left Russia, Britain and the U.S.A. as major powers with primary interests in Afghanistan. Which way King Zahir Shah's leanings are, it is difficult to guess. Some light is shed on the question by a closer study of the nature of agreement and comments thereon. The signing of the agreement by M. Molotov, the Soviet Minister for Foreign

Affairs and Sultan Ahmed Khan, the Afghan Ambassador in Russia, was hailed by the Moscow Press "as an important phase in the development of friendly relations between the two countries". The agreement provided for the establishment of the state boundary between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan along the Thalway and, in non-navigable port, along the middle of Amina Darya and Panja rivers, the re-demarcation of land sectors of Soviet-Afghan boundary and also settlement of certain other questions. The Soviet commentator, Vladimirov in 'Izvestia', official Soviet newspaper wrote, "The agreement which shows once more the attentive attitude of the Soviet Government towards the needs and rights of small nations, will facilitate further development and consolidation of Soviet-Afghan relations."

An article which appeared in the "National Herald" the official organ of Indian National Congress, stated, "The Afghan-Soviet agreement providing for demarcation of the frontier between them is likely to result in the northern provinces of Afghanistan going to the U.S.S.R. In exchange for such an enormous concession, the U.S.S.R. would doubtless support Afghanistan for the return of Afghan territory annexed by Britain and now parts of British Baluchistan, N.W.F.P., and the territory inhabited by independent Afghan tribesmen between British India proper and Afghanistan". The above quoted comment was criticised by the 'New Times' a Soviet Journal, which repudiating the allegations of imperialistic designs on the part of Russia stated that the Agreement has paved the way for "greater friendship and adjustment of mutual interests".

There is a small number of academicians, who go as far as to speculate that Afghanistan like Khiva, Tashkent, and

Bokhara, where Islamic culture and religion still predominate, might shortly go Communist. Sir Firoz Khan Noon addressing the Royal Asian Society in 1944 in the United Kingdom said, "It may be that the Soviet Union is hoping that some day all those Muslim countries bordering on Russia may become states inside the Union".

While a Soviet-Afghan alliance is not improbable but the assertion that Afghanistan would shortly go Communist is absurd. Whatever the economic advantages might accrue to Afghans by joining the U.S.S.R., they can never give their consent to part with their undiluted freedom. Under the present state of civilisation Afghans regard Communism as heresy and are attached to their peculiar ways of living. The contemporary critics of the doctrine of sovereignty such as Duguit, Karabbe, Laski, Barker and Lindsay have hardly exercised any influence on the minds of most advanced Afghans. To believe that they would expunge from political theory the monistic notions of sovereignty and join the U.S.S.R. is to deceive one self.

The geographical and strategic position of Afghanistan has always forced its statesmen and rulers to covet the friendship of Great Britain rather than that of its immediate neighbour and hereditary enemy, Russia. Just at the outbreak of the First Afghan War, Russia had come forward with offers to Afghanistan which were certainly substantial, Iran had been lavish in her promises, Bokhara and other states had not been backward. "Yet in all that had passed", wrote the British Envoy to Mr. Macnaughten, "the Chief of Kabul declared that he prefers the sympathy and the friendly offers of the British to all those offers however alluring they may

seem" Similar was the attitude of Amir Sher Ali against whom Britain waged the second Afghan War. His envoy who had gone to Simla to confer with the Viceroy of India in 1873 said to Northbrook, "Whatever specific assurance the Russians may give and however often these may be repeated, the people of Afghanistan can place no confidence in them and will never rest satisfied unless they are assured of the aid of the British Government." Though the memories of the two unjust wars still rankle in the Afghan minds it has not prevented them from offering their co-operation during 1914-18 and 1939-45 when British fortune was at its lowest ebb.

The frontier problem still constitutes a source of friction between Pakistan and Afghanistan. When the Muslim nation was facing the heavy onslaughts of Hindu imperialism and when India was just to be partitioned, the Afghan demand, presented to the British and Indian Governments concerning the future of the tribal areas, fell like a bombshell. Strong exception to the Afghan Note was taken by all sections of the Press in India and Pakistan. The Hindu paper "Hindustan Times" described it as an "open intervention in the internal affairs of another country", whilst the Muslim paper "Dawn" declared that "Pakistan cannot countenance any interference in its domestic issues by any foreign Power, Muslim or non-Muslim".

## Chapter III

# PAKISTAN

| For thousands of years the peoples of Pakistan and the Middle East have been united by the most intimate ties. Modern researchers have discovered that Pakistan then part of India was in touch with old Chaldea (Modern Iraq 7,000 years ago). The closer relations existing between the peoples of Pakistan and the Babylonians also appear broadly in the pages of history. When the Achæmenids of Iran, with their capital at Persepolis, established their suzerainty over the whole of the Middle East from the Pakistan frontier to Egypt, the Pakistan-Middle Eastern trade registered a rapid rise. The invasion of Alexander further laid open the routes of Turkistan-European trade and the commercial relations of Pakistan with Western countries were strengthened. While the struggle between the Byzantium Empire of Constantinople and the Iranian Sassanid Empire continued after the retreat of Alexander, there emerged a new force, Islam, which forged a stronger link between the territories of Pakistan and the Middle East.

### Islamic Link

Within 25 years of the passing away of the Prophet Arabs conquered the whole of Iran and Syria and Armenia and a portion of Central Asia and Egypt. The Muslims went on advancing in the east, conquered Herat, Kabul and Balkh and reached the Indus river and Sindh. Admitting that the Arabs had friendly relations with the people in Sindh, Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru remarks, "Indeed, the most noticeable

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thing about this period of history is the contrast between the toleration of the Muslim Arab and the intolerance of the Christians in Europe". The Arabs maintained cordial relations with the Indian rulers of the South, especially the Rashtrakutas. Many Arabs settled along the west coast of India and built mosques in their settlements. Arab travellers and traders visited various parts of Pakistan and India.

The Arabs, the Afghans and the Turks, who carved out an empire in India, began to regard the country as their home but they were never completely overpowered by territorial patriotism. Not only there was regular intercourse between the Muslims of India and the people of the Middle East but even sovereign and independent Muslim rulers of India owed their allegiance to the Caliph of Islam outside India. The "Futuhul-Buldan" states that throughout the period in which the Arab governors held sway over Sind, the Khutba continued to be read in the name of Caliph. Mahmud of Ghazni is also said to have recognised the supreme authority of "the successor of the Prophet of God". Iltutmish considered himself fortunate to receive the investiture of diploma and title, which came from Al-Mustansir, the Abbaside Caliph of Baghdad. "His successors", says Professor T. W. Arnold, "followed this pious example. The name of the last Abbaside Khalifah of Baghdad, Mustasim (1242-1258), first appears on the coins of Alauddin Masud-Shah (1241-1246, and though Mustasim was put to death by the Mongols in 1258), his name still appears on the coins of successive kings of Delhi, e. g. Mahmud Shah Nasiruddin (1246-1265), Ghiyasuddin Balban (1265-1287), and Muizuddin Kaikobad (1287-1290), the last monarch of the so-called 'Slave' dynasty, and the first of these continued to have the name of Mustasim mentioned



in the Khutbah. A new dynasty arose, that of the Khilji, the same need for legitimization was apparently still felt, and the coins of Jalaluddin Firuz Shah II (1290-1295) continued to bear the name of Mustasim, though this Caliph had been trampled to death by the Mongols more than thirty years before". Muhammad Shah Tughlaq recognised the Caliph of Egypt as the rightful successor and in 1343 A. D. his ambassador to Egypt, Haji Said Sarsari returned to the Sultan bringing "honours and a robe from the Khalifah. As regards the Mughals, Arnold says, "It certainly never formed any part of the policy of Mughals to acknowledge the overlordship of the Ottoman Sultan, their own wealth and power made them independent of outside assistance, even if they could have been rendered by an empire so far removed from their own, nor did the current theory of the Caliphate suggest submission to some central Muslim authority.....Correspondence was opened in the name of Akbar in 1557 with (the Ottoman) Sultan Sulaiman, when Akbar was hardly a boy, fourteen years of age, advantage was taken of the Turkish admiral, Sidi Ali Katibi, to establish relations with the Ottoman court, and 'string the kingly pearls of confidence on the thread of affection' and 'bind together the claims of union and love'".

### **British Rule**

As long as there was a nominal ruler on the Mughal throne, Muslim intelligentsia was not much worried about the fate of the Caliph of Constantinople. But after the Britishers deposed the last of the Mughal rulers in 1857, Indian Muslims began to take unusual interest in the Turkish Caliphate. Though the Muslim power was in the process of being liquidated,

the Indian Muslims never failed to make common cause with the Mussalmans of the rest of the world. This has been considered as the greatest crime of Indian Muslims; and British rulers and a majority of Hindus have vehemently condemned it. Lord Ellenborough, the Governor General of India wrote to the Duke of Wellington from Simla on October 4, 1842 after the fall of Kabul and Ghazni in the first Anglo-Afghan war, "I could not have credited the extent to which the Mohammedans desired our failure in Afghanistan, unless I heard here circumstances which prove that the feeling pervaded even those entirely dependent on us. The Hindus, on the other hand, are delighted. It seems to me most unwise when we are sure of the hostility of one-tenth not to secure the enthusiastic support of the nine-tenths which are faithful". Again, writing to the Duke of Wellington on January 19, 1843, Lord Ellenborough wrote, 'I cannot close my eyes to the belief that the race (Mohammedans) is fundamentally hostile to us and therefore our true policy is to conciliate the Hindus'. The sympathy of Indian Muslims with Turkey was prominent as long ago as the time of the Crimean war, and is referred to in the private correspondence of Lord Dalhousie which has now been published. Though the Indian Muslims lived under an alien rule, yet they drew their inspiration from Islamic countries. Thus the Wahabi movement, founded in Arabia during the eighteenth century and of which the present king Ibn Saud is an adherent, had more pronounced influence in India than anywhere outside the land of its birth. Influenced by the new teachings, the Indian Wahabis raised the question whether India was 'Darul Harab' or 'Darul Islam', preached the necessity of emigration to lands under Muslim rule, and carried their agitation all over

India. The Rebel camp of the Wahabis became so menacing that before the Second Anglo-Afghan war, Mr. W. W. Hunter wrote "During nine centuries, the Indian people have been accustomed to look for invasion from the north, and no one can predict the proportions to which this Rebel Camp, backed by the Mussalman hordes from the westward, might attain, under a leader who knew how to weld together the nations of Asia in a Crescentade".

The heavy hand of the British fell on the Muslims after 1857. They considered the Muslims more aggressive and militant, possessing memories of recent rule in India, and therefore more dangerous. The Britishers consequently launched a policy of conciliating the Hindus. "The Hindus" says Pundit Nehru, "had taken far more kindly to the English language and clerical jobs, and seemed to be more docile." Despite the harsh treatment meted out to Muslims neither their desire for liberation nor their sympathies with their brethren in other countries suffered any diminution. On the contrary the relations of Indian Muslims with Islamic world, particularly the Ottoman Caliphate began to assume something of form and substance. The Sultan, Abdul Hamid II gave a strong fillip to the Pan-Islamic movement which was hailed with great enthusiasm by the Indian Muslims. When Jemaluddin-Afghani made his headquarters at Hyderabad and Calcutta during his enforced stay in India (1879-1881) the number of Pan-Islamists increased. Jemaluddin believed that if the Muslim countries were once freed from the incubus of foreign domination, and Islam itself adopted to the demands of the present-day conditions, the Muslim peoples would be able to work out for themselves a new and glorious order of affairs,

without invitation of or dependence on European nations. He wanted the unification of all Muslim peoples under one Islamic government, over which the one supreme Caliph should be an undisputed ruler as in the glorious days of Islam.

Jemaluddin Afghani influenced the Muslim intelligentsia in India. In 1903 a lawyer named Abdullah-al-Mamun Suhrawardy founded the Pan-Islamic Society in London. Its secretary was Sheikh M. H. Kidwai, a Lucknow Barrister, who wrote many books on Pan-Islamism. Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal too was much impressed by Jemaluddin and he called the latter as a "living link between the past and the future of Mussulmans". Iqbal declared "Islam is neither nationalism nor imperialism but a league of nations, which recognises artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members." Among the Muslim States Iqbal praised Kemalist Turkey, which according to him "alone has shaken off its dogmatic slumber and attained to self-consciousness". "Iqbal also appealed to Muslim nations" to sink into her own deeper self, temporarily focus her vision on herself alone, until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics". Similarly Maulana Mohammad Ali, the celebrated Indian leader and great Pan-Islamist wrote, "Europeans regard the religious bonds which unite Mussalmans in the twentieth century as the mark of a phase of social and political evolution which they themselves left behind with the Middle Ages. How ill they grasp what religion means to a Mussalman. They forget that Islam is not only a religion, but likewise a social organisation, a type of culture, a nationality".

The Pan-Islamic ideas completely overpowered the minds of the Indian Muslims in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The first Balkan War created considerable sympathy with Turkey and resentment at the apparently passive attitude of the British Government. Muslim politicians greatly resented the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 and contrasted British inaction during the Balkan War with her championship of Turkey in the nineteenth century. Indian Muslims deeply lamented that Muslim powers Morocco, Iran and Turkey were sinking lower into depths of submission. The wars in which Turkey became involved called forth demonstrations of sympathy in India. Gifts were sent to the Red Crescent and a number of young Indian Muslims also volunteered their services. Chaudhry Khal Kuzzaman, now the undisputed leader of the greatest and most representative political party of Pakistan, was one of those selfless enthusiasts. Assistance to Turkey was rendered in several other ways. When the Damascus-Medina railway project was being promoted by the Caliph, subscriptions from Indian Muslims were sent forward from Lahore. In 1913 a society of the "Servants of the Caaba" was founded in Lucknow to protect the Holy cities of Islam throughout the world.

### **Khilafat Movement**

The position of the Indian Muslims became exceedingly difficult when Turkey was declared to be at war with Britain in 1914. That Pan-Islamism should be silent was hardly to be expected. The President of the All India Muslim League stated, 'It is the cherished desire of the followers of Islam that when peace comes and pray God that it may come soon, Muslim countries should be dealt with in such a way that their

dignity will not be compromised in the future." When Sharif Hussein of Hijaz revolted against the Ottoman Caliph, the indignation of Indian Muslims knew no bounds. They believed that the Sharif had received British encouragement and considered him totally incapable of maintaining independence and sovereignty of the Holy Places of Islam. The Indian Muslims convened a public meeting which on June 27, 1916 passed a resolution condemning the "Arab rebels headed by the Sharif of Mecca and their sympathisers as enemies of Islam". Another resolution repudiated "the suggestion, conveyed in a Calcutta telegram, that any class of Indian Mussalmans could be delighted with the reported Arab rebellion or could view with any feeling other than alarm and disgust at the consequences likely to follow therefrom." Muslims of India also began to be fearful of the judgment that would be meted out to Turkey in case she was defeated. This fear led to the birth of the Khilafat agitation. Though the British Premier gave an assurance in August, 1917 that the Allies would seek to preserve the best interests of Islam in the final settlement with Turkey, the agitation did not subside.

A central Khilafat organisation was established in Bombay in 1920 with an extensive network of provincial and local branches. For a time the Muslim League completely receded into the background. Enormous funds were gathered from every Muslim hamlet in the country. A scheme of nationalist education was also initiated. An Indian Khilafat delegation proceeded to London and Paris to see that the rights of the Caliphate, together with the sanctity of the Jaziratul-Arab were not violated. The All India Muslim League at its session in 1919 expressed "its deep dis-

appointment at the disregard shown by the British Government to the repeated representations made by Indian Mussalmans through their representatives in England and India regarding the question of the Khilafat, holy places and the Jaziratul Arab and feels constrained to express that no settlement contemplating the dismemberment of Turkey would ever satisfy Indian Mussalmans but keep them in a state of perpetual dissatisfaction and discontent, for the grave consequences of which they shall not be responsible. Under the circumstances the Mussalmans would be fully justified to carry on all possible methods of constitutional agitation open to them including boycott of the British Army if it is likely to be used outside India for imperial and anti-Islamic purposes." Receiving regularly disappointing news from outside, Muslim enthusiasm ran high. Thousands of them courted arrests, gave up government jobs and suffered untold miseries. Certain leaders advocated that India under British rule had ceased to be a land where Muslims could exercise the functions of their religion. The result was that about eighteen thousand people sold their property and migrated to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Every effort was made to save the dissolution of the Caliphate. The Rt. Hon'ble Syed Amir Ali and His Highness the Aga Khan also addressed a letter to General Ismat Pasha in which they stated, "In the Sunni communion, we would not point out, the spiritual leadership forms the link which binds the followers of Islam as a vast congregation. When the Caliphate was in peril from outside attacks, Mussalman feeling all over the world was violently agitated, and the Muslims of India gave their sympathy and support to the Turkish nation in the belief that in fighting for their independence they were fighting also for

the preservation intact of the institution which symbolised Muslim solidarity. Throughout these critical years we strenuously pleaded for the Turkish cause, and a British Muslim organisation has, ever since the Turko-Italian war in Tripoli and Cyrenaica, devoted its energies in endeavouring to alleviate the untold suffering and distress among the Turkish people". Kemal Ataturk pricked the Khilafat bubble by informing the Central Khilafat Committee in India on March 10, 1922 that the Caliph was deposed and that "the Khilafat office idea, which has been conserved since ages to realise the basis of united Muslim government in the world has never been realised, and on the contrary has been a constant cause of strife and duplicity among Muslims, whereas the real interests accept as a principle that the social associations may constitute themselves into independent governments. The spiritual and real bond between Muslim nations is understood in the signification of the sacred verse 'Innamul mominoun ikhwan'."

The abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 gave a rude shock to Indian Muslims who, however, little realised that the Caliphate, as it was then constituted, had become absolutely incompetent to face the onslaughts of foreign powers. Their disappointment was also due to the belief that a Turkish state solely guided by territorial patriotism could neither be of any use to the Muslims of the world nor play a better role in power-politics than many of the small states of Europe. The Caliphate represented to Indian Muslims the glory of Islam and they could not look with equanimity the liquidation of that symbolic greatness. The Turkish annoyance at the Khilafat agitation was also natural. They did not want Indians to meddle in affairs which they did not properly understand.



The Turks however underrated the contributions made by Indian Muslims to Turkish independence. Rightly said Maulana Muhammad Ali at the Khilafat Conference in 1925 that "if the Turks had won their independence the Indian Muslims had in some small way made that possible by carrying on the agitation that it was a sin for the Muslim to kill a Muslim. This had prevented the British Government in those days to send Indian troops to fight the Turks".

### **Muslim League's Support**

The Indian disappointment and Turkish annoyance were however short-lived. After Kemal Ataturk established himself as the President of Turkish Republic, he became the hero of Indian Muslims. This is clearly proved by the rich tribute paid to Ataturk on his death by the leader of Indian Muslims. Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the President of the All India Muslim League, commented, 'His death has come as the greatest blow to the Muslim world. He was the foremost figure in the Muslim East, in Iran and Afghanistan, in Egypt and of course in Turkey, he demonstrated to the consternation of the rest of the world that Muslim nations were coming into their own. In Kemal Ataturk, the Islamic world has lost a great hero. With the example of this great man in front of them as an inspiration, will the Muslims of India still remain in quagmire?' The Khilafatists too began to make common cause with the nationalist Turkey though they did not lose their interest in Muslim world affairs.

The All India Muslim League passed a resolution on December 30, 1924 on the Egyptian troubles stating that the reprisals exacted by British Government on the murder of Sir Lee Stack were unwarranted and that the Muslim

League "strongly feels that the action of the British Government is aimed at crushing the independence of Egypt and therefore strongly condemns it." The All India Muslim League on January 3, 1926 declared that Iraq was a part of the Jaziratul Arab and as such should not be left under non-Muslim control of the British as the Mandatory Power and that the Muslim League protested against the decision of the Council of the League of Nations which offered to the British an extension of their Mandate over Iraq for 25 years. The Muslim League further protested against the Mosul decision of the League of Nations, expressed the hope that Britain would recognise the right of Turkey to the Mosul Vilayet and settle the question of peaceful negotiations. In the event of war breaking out, the Muslim League considered that the feelings of the Muslims of India were calculated to be inflamed beyond control throughout the country and might prove a great and ruinous disaster. At the Khilafat Conference in 1925, Maulana Muhammad Ali prayed that the Turks might remain in possession of Mosul. A resolution moved at the same Conference by Dr. Syed Sulaiman Nadvi condemned the brutal bombardment of Damascus by the French and expressed whole-hearted sympathy with the people of Syria in their struggle for freedom. King Ibn Saud was also congratulated on his liberation of the Hijaz.

The Khilafatists, meanwhile, also responded to a call from Cairo for a Khilafat Conference held in Cairo, during 1926 to confer on the election of a Caliph to act as the head of a "League of Muslim Nations." During the same year the Khilafat Committee sent a deputation to Nejd to intervene and settle the dispute between the warring

elements. Though the Government of India were willing to permit a deputation of the Committee to Turkey, the Turkish Government did not quite like the idea which had consequently to be abandoned.

Just after the Calcutta Session of the Khilafat Conference in 1928, disturbances broke out across the North Western Frontier leading to the abdication of King Amanullah of Afghanistan whom the Muslims of India respected because he was reputed to be a strong man and a believer in Pan-Islamism. They sympathised with Amanullah and repeatedly condemned the regime of Bachha Saqqao. The Indian Muslims, however, heaved a sigh of relief on the accession of Nadir Khan.

The activities of the Khilafat Committee till its total eclipse by the All India Muslim League in 1936 were mainly cultural, social and religious. Some of its leaders were doing activities which were regarded as part of a move for Pan-Islamism, but they had no political object in view. Outside India the Committee kept itself in touch with similar organisations in Cairo, Palestine, Damascus etc. with a view to promoting unity among Muslims encouraging Muslim trade and industries and generally enhancing their well-being. Maulana Muhammad Ali and his brother Maulana Shaukt Ali visited foreign Islamic countries with the object of organising a world Tanzim, with Jerusalem as its headquarters. They also mooted out the idea of an Arab federation. In 1931 the Khilafat Conference by a resolution condemned the Italian atrocities in 'Tripoli' and urged Muslims to boycott all Italian manufacturers and in this connection called upon them to organise meetings throughout the country on June

26, 1931. During this time, the movement lost Maulana Mohammad Ali, who passed away in London in the midst of his strenuous works for his country and Muslims and the work of carrying on the increasing activities of the Khilafat Committee fell on the shoulders of his brother, Maulana Shaukat Ali. The invitation to bury the departed leader in the mosque of Omar in Jerusalem brought the Indian Muslims closer to the Arabs. This fellow-feeling among Muslims in different parts of the globe found expression in a huge conference held in Jerusalem which served to create a new spirit of internationalism among the followers of Islam.

When the Palestinian Arabs, after the huge Jewish immigration into Palestine, invoked the sympathy of Muslims in India, the latter readily responded to it. The Khilafat organisation took a leading part in this activity. A Palestine Delegation paid a visit to India and Indian Muslims called meetings and sent deputations to the authorities. Arrangements were also made for sending a deputation to London. The All India Khilafat Committee met at Lucknow in December, 1933, when the Palestine Committee was also held. The President, Mr. Murtuza Bahadur, protested against the Balfour Declaration which "converted the home of Arabs for centuries, which was sacred to the Muslim World, into a national home for Jews." Maulana Shaukat Ali made preliminary arrangements to form a deputation to wait on the Viceroy who refused to meet for want of time. He, however, informed the President of the Committee that he would represent the case of the deputation to the Secretary of State for India and through him to the Secretary of State for Colonies during his visit to England in 1939. The Council of the All India Muslim League on April 2, 1934 again by a

resolution supported the proposal of a strong and influential deputation to wait on the Viceroy to lay before him as to how the Balfour Declaration had supported the Jews of the world to buy land and settle down in Palestine, which deprived their original inhabitants of their rights and ruined the peace of the sacred world.

When the All India Muslim League was reconstituted in October, 1937, it began to display unusual interest in the affairs of the Muslim world. In the course of the welcome address as the Chairman of the Reception Committee at the League Session at Lucknow in 1937, Raja Mohammad Amir Ahmad Khan of Mahmudabad said, "What happens in India today is of vital importance to Asia and other continents tomorrow. Events in China, Spain and Palestine have more than national importance. The solution of the problems in these countries will affect us all, specially the problem of Palestine where our brothers are carrying on an unequal yet gallant struggle against overwhelming odds against money and machine guns." Mr. M.A. Jinnah said, "May I point out to Great Britain that this question of Palestine, if not fairly and squarely met, boldly and courageously decided, is going to be the turning point in the history of the British Empire." At the same session Muslim League passed a resolution which expressed complete confidence of Indian Muslims in the Supreme Muslim Council and the Arab Higher Committee under the leadership of the Grand Mufti. A similar resolution was adopted in 1938 by the annual session of the All India Muslim League at Patna. Referring to Arab sacrifices Mr. Jinnah said, "All our sympathies are with those valiant martyrs who are fighting the battle of freedom against

usurpers They are being subjected to monstrous injustices which are being propped up by the British imperialism with the ulterior motive of placating international Jewry, which commands the money bags "

### **Khaliquzzaman's Delegation**

The All India Muslim League also sent a delegation consisting of Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman and Mr Abdur Rehman Siddiqui and subsequently joined by Maulana Hasrat Mohani, which took part in the deliberations at the Palestine Conference held in Cairo The Indian delegates are reported to have made a very good impression The bond between the Arabs and Indian Muslims has since then become tighter. This is fully borne out by the following extract of a letter written by Jemaal Hussein, Vice-Chairman of the Arab Higher Committee in a letter to Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman from the Lebanon on July 22, 1939. Jemaal Hussein wrote, "We were all really impressed by your wisdom, coolness and ways of judgment. We wish you will not forget to write us your views when anything occurs to you on the situation You must consider they will be always lavishly and deeply considered."

On November 2, 1939 Al-Haj Emin el-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in a letter to Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman from Baghdad made far-reaching suggestions. His Eminence wrote, 'In connection with the present war my opinion is to wait for opportunities and not to be hasty until we are able to see our way through. At any rate it is very important not to lose the opportunity of the present war. Muslims should show their existence and ask for their rights with absolute frankness The pointing out of Palestine's

case in Muslim demands in India and elsewhere is very useful. It is very essential for Muslims all over the world to be in touch with each other so as to change views for the general interests of Islam. And it will be very beneficial if one of you while on his way to Holy Mecca tries to meet me in Baghdad."

The Working Committee of the All India Muslim League met on July 2, 1939 and having examined the White Paper and having heard the Muslim League delegates, declared that the proposals embodied in the White Paper were most unsatisfactory and disappointing and were totally unacceptable. The Working Committee resolved that a Palestine Fund be opened forthwith for the relief of the dependents of those who lost their lives or suffered in the struggle for independence. The Working Committee also expressed its appreciation of the services rendered by Chaudry Khaliquzzaman and Mr. Abdur Rehman Siddiqui who went to Cairo, London and the Middle East in connection with the Palestine question.

## **World War II**

When the British Viceroy in India asked for the co-operation of Muslim League in the prosecution of war in 1939, the League President stipulated Indian Muslims' participation on four conditions two of which related to the Muslim world. Mr. M. A. Jinnah demanded: "(3) H. M. Government should try and meet all the reasonable national demands of the Arabs in Palestine, and (4) Indian troops will not be used outside India against any Muslim Power or country." The Viceroy stated, "In framing their policy for Palestine, H. M. Government have endeavoured to meet all

reasonable Arab demands, and they continue to be fully alive to the importance of that issue. Finally, you asked for an assurance that Indian troops will not be used outside India against any Muslim Power or country. This question is fortunately hypothetical, since His Majesty is not at war with any Muslim Power. You will appreciate however that it is impossible to give a guarantee in terms so wide as those of your letter, which would have the effect of limiting India's right to use its own arm in its own defence in circumstances which cannot now be foreseen. In the present situation, however, as you are aware, every precaution has been taken by H. M. Government at the instance of the Government of India to ensure that Muslim feeling in India on this matter is fully respected."

¶ The sympathies of Indian Muslims were not kept confined to Palestinian Arabs but they were also extended to people of other Muslim states. When the Allied troops marched to some of the Muslim countries, the All India Muslim League in 1941 passed the following resolution. "The Mussalmans of India are greatly perturbed at and view with alarm the military occupation of certain Muslim states in the Near East by Great Britain and her allies. The Working Committee of the All India Muslim League, therefore, urge upon the British Government and her allies to declare unequivocally that the sovereignty and independence of those Muslim states will be immediately restored as soon as circumstances permit and that the pernicious system of Mandates and the creation of zones of influence for European powers over the countries will not be resorted to." By another resolution the Committee stated, "The Working



Committee have learnt with dismay the news of the unprovoked aggression against Iran by Great Britain and Russia, contrary to all the declarations of the British Government to respect the neutrality and sovereignty of non-combatant states to uphold which the British Government and her Allies are fighting Nazism, and in violation of the fundamental principles of international law, and warn the Government that this action of the Allies will still more complicate the Near Eastern situation and alienate the sympathies of Muslim India and create bitterness in their hearts, which will result in the withdrawal of every help by them to the Allied cause." Further, the All India Muslim League Council at Delhi in February, 1942 passed a resolution expressing great concern and sympathy with the Muslim Cossacks "who have come into India from Soviet Russia and the great hardships and privations they have suffered owing to lack of food, shelter and sympathy." The Council requested the Government of India to make proper arrangement and provision for the welfare of these Cossacks and find ways and means to allow them to settle in some parts of the North-West of India. The Cossacks were ultimately invited by the Muslim ruler of Bhopal to settle in his state.

The affairs in the Middle East continued to be watched with great concern by the Muslims of India. At the meeting of the All India Muslim League Council held at New Delhi in April, 1943, Mr. Jinnah himself moved a resolution on Palestine and Syria, which reiterating the demand for the fulfilment of Arab national demands for Arab independence in Palestine and Syria, solemnly warned the British Government against any step or move which might prove detrimental to Arab national interests and declared that such a policy

would be "bitterly resented by the whole Arab and Islamic world as an outrage on democracy and justice and inalienable Arab rights to their homelands" At the meeting of the Muslim League held in November, 1943, three resolutions were adopted on Islamic countries. One of them urged upon British Government in particular and other Allied powers that territories released from the control of Italy namely Cyrenaica, Libya and Tripoli should not only be not handed back to the Italian Government but they be constituted as independent sovereign states and that the vicious system of mandates should be abolished once for all and the countries of which the Mandates were held by Britain and France, namely Palestine, Syria and the Lebanon be restored to the people of those countries to set up their own sovereign Governments of those territories and asked the United Powers to urge France to liberate Morocco, Algeria and Tunis. The second resolution referred to the Lebanon and viewed with profound alarm the grave situation that had arisen in the Lebanon as a result of the action of the French authorities in forcibly suppressing the demand of full autonomy for the Lebanese.

### **Jinnah's Response**

Placing trust in Indian Muslim support, an influential Cairo journal, the "Middle East Opinion" issued an appeal in July, 1946 for an All-Orient Pro-Palestine Congress to be held in India. Mr. M. A Jinnah enthusiastically welcomed the idea and promptly conveyed his assent to the Cairo journal. Mr. Jinnah's response was greatly appreciated in the Muslim world. The "Middle East Opinion", appreciating the significance of Mr Jinnah's attitude wrote, "The President

of the Muslim League speaks in the name of one hundred million Indian Muslims, a figure which might not be overlooked by the Crossmans, Silvermans, Crums, Wagners, Cellers, and otherwise "guys", whose knowledge of Middle Eastern affairs is so scanty that they do not know what they are talking about when meddling on such a delicate problem as that of Palestine".

Mr. Jinnah's short stay at Cairo along with Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, General Secretary, All India Muslim League, while going and coming back from London in December, 1946 further strengthened the bond between Muslim India and the Middle Eastern states. At Basra Mr. Jinnah was given a rousing reception. In Egypt the leading Arab leaders accorded to him the greatest hospitality. He had the opportunity of meeting top-ranking Arabs such as King Farouk, Azzam Pasha, Secretary-General Arab League, El-Nokrashy Pasha, the Egyptian Premier, Jemal Husseini, Al-Haj Amin-el-Husseini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Hasan-el-Banna, Leader of the Muslim Brotherhood Association, Nahas Pasha, the Wafdist Leader, Makram Ebeid Pasha, the leader of the Wafdist Bloc, and the Secretary of the Liberal Constitutional Party. Not only the Arab leaders and organisations assured Mr. Jinnah of the fullest sympathy with the cause of Muslim India but King Abdullah of Transjordan went as far as to declare in January, 1947 at Ankara that Iran, Afghanistan, North Africa, and possibly even Pakistan in India should be included along with Turkey and the Arab states in a Turko-Arab Bloc.

### **Hindu Attitude**

The attitude of the Hindus of India towards the Middle East also deserves our attention. It must be remembered

that despite their association for hundreds of years, the Hindus and Muslims failed to evolve out a common nationality. There has in fact been no real fusion. Rightly reported the Simon Commission that "it would be utter misapprehension to suppose that Hindu-Muslim antagonism is analogous to the separation between religious denominations in contemporary Europe. Differences of race, a different system of law, and the absence of inter-marriage constitute a far more effective barrier. It is a basic opposition manifesting itself at every turn in social custom and economic competition, as well as in mutual religious antipathy." The Hindu-Muslim differences are also visible in the approach of the two peoples towards the Muslim States of the world.

Nursing a grievance against the Indian Muslims, the Hindus have not been much enthusiastic about affairs in the Middle East. On the contrary, the defeat of Muslim powers outside India in the nineteenth century has sometimes been received by Hindu fanatics with suppressed jubilation. Testifying to this fact, Lord Ellenborough giving Hindu and Muslim reaction on the fall of Kabul and Ghazni wrote on October 4, 1842, "The Hindus, on the other hand, are delighted." A majority of Hindus have always considered Muslims whether they belonged to India or to any other country as Melachhas (foreigners or barbarians). Even Bal Gangadhar Tilak, supposed to be the real founder of the Indian National Congress, had the same narrow outlook. Justifying the treacherous murder of Afzal Khan, a Moghul Governor, by Shivaji, the Hindu Maratha leader, Tilak, said, "Shri Shivaji did nothing with a view to fill the small void of his own stomach. With benevolent intentions he murdered Afzal Khan for the good of others. If thieves enter our house and we have not suf-

ficient strength to drive them out, we should without hesitation shut them up and burn them alive. God has not conferred on Melanchhas the grant inscribed on copper-plate of the Kingdom of Hindustan."

Though during the Khilafat movement a section of Hindus and also Mr. Gandhi supported the Indian Muslims, it cannot be ignored that the Central Khilafat Committee itself owed its origin to the reticence shown by the All India Congress Committee in 1920 to the question of the Khilafat. It was after considerable agitation by the Khilafat Committee and the publication of the Hunter Commission Report that Congress included the issue of Khilafat in its programme. During the non-cooperation movement while Hindus were agitating for the Reforms, the Muslims were in a larger measure clamouring for the continuance of Khilafat. The Khilafat movement did not enjoy the wholehearted support of Hindus. This is admitted by the official chronicler of Congress, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, who referring to the meeting of the All India Congress Committee convened at Banares to discuss the Turkish question says, "Although Lokamanya Tilak passed Benares at the time, he did not attend the Benares meeting, for his heart was not wholly in the Khilafat agitation." Not only Tilak was disinterested but a considerable majority of Hindus. Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru also admits that behind the non-cooperation movement there "could be distinguished a Hindu nationalism and a Muslim nationalism partly looking beyond the frontiers of India."

The liberals among the Hindus, however, feel that the nationalist movement in India cannot buy off world opinion

for them unless they make common cause with similar movements in other countries. The hatred of Western imperialism has prompted them to sympathise with the oppressed peoples of other countries particularly. This sympathy has coloured the vision of a section of enlightened Hindus, typically represented by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. "I know that whenever I have read of the conflicts of Arabs in Spain or during the crusades", says Mr. Nehru, "my sympathies have always been with them. I try to be impartial and objective, but, try as I will, the Asiatic in me influences my judgment when an Asiatic people are concerned." Despite loud Hindu professions it cannot be ignored that Hindu love for Asia is confined to Burma, Siam and China with which the ancient Hindu India had cultural affinities. If the Pan-Asiatic Federations, proposed by Congress or Hindu leaders, include Afghanistan or Iran, it is because they are strategically important to India.

The resolutions passed by the Indian National Congress are generally vague and seldom refer particularly to the Muslim states. Tilak was the first Congress leader to refer to India's relations with East. He observed, "India is self-contained, harbours no design upon the integrity of other states and has no ambition outside. With her vast area enormous resources and prodigious population, she may well aspire to be a leading power in Asia. She could, therefore, be a powerful steward of the League of Nations in the East for maintaining the peace of the world..." Tilak's future India was likely to be an imperialist power for, as an agent of British imperialism, he also promised to maintain "the stability of the British Empire against all aggressors and disturbers of peace, whether in Asia or elsewhere."

The policy laid down by Tilak was literally followed by his successors. Hindu leadership, it must be remembered, has always been of the Fascist brand and the whole Congress movement has, in fact, remained a bourgeois movement having as its sole object the defence of the bourgeoisie against challenges from within and without. "My politics", says Mr. Nehru in his autobiography, "had been those of my class the bourgeoisie." The hegemony of this class is challenged by the masses. Since the challenge must be met by the Hindu ruling class, emphasis is laid upon law and order, discipline, national unity and salvation through ultra-patriotic dictatorship. Iron-dictators like Sardar Patel are exalted and sober-minded politicians are ruthlessly suppressed. In accordance with this mentality a strong Hindu theocratic Government is called for to suppress the so-called national enemies, in which category are placed the Muslims and political groups aiming at changing the existing distribution of wealth and political power. The other most common objects of attack are Communists, Labour leaders, millions of oppressed "low" caste Hindus particularly belonging to the Scheduled Caste Federation and all whose political doctrines such as the Radical Democrats fail to conform to the highest standards of patriotic respectability. A totalitarian rule is the ideal of Hindu bourgeoisie.

This Fascist class also harbours designs to play a distinguished role in the world power-politics. Its top-ranking leaders are advocates of military preparedness. It is through the reorganised army, navy and air force that the Hindu leaders dream to suppress internal dissent and attain their goal in international politics. Many Hindu publicists, such as Mr. K.M. Pannikar are already advocating for a violently

imperialistic policy Mr Pannikar is of opinion that an Indian defence system must extend south-eastwards far beyond Burma and Ceylon and must cover Malaya, Siam, and Indo-China and the great arc of islands and air-bases which stretches through the Dutch East Indies to the Philippines on one side and to Australia and New Zealand on the other. He further suggests that the approaches for the west must likewise be safeguarded—the Suez Canal, Aden, the East Coast of Africa, Madagascar and Mauritius. It is stated that of such a security system for the Indian Ocean arc, India would be the central stronghold and strategic base, and in course of time, with the development of her own military and industrial resources, she would play the major part in its operations.

This ideal defence system is to be forged with the active co-operation of big powers. Some of the Hindu fanatics go a step further. Dr Moonje, the President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha in a speech in 1941 said in clear language that in this sub-continent 'Hindu Raj must be established and if the Muslims do not behave, they will annex Afghanistan and carry the frontier to Hindu-Kush. The sooner the Muslims realise this position the better for them. The Muslims cannot get one iota more concession than as a minority' "

The commercial imperialism, proposed by the Hindu capitalists, is more dangerous. The Middle East, like the depressed areas, is to be exploited as a market for goods produced in India, for surplus capital seeking investment and also for the raw materials. The Hindus have already colonised certain ports and cities of the Middle East. The



Hindu bourgeoisie which owns and manages production in India is expected to bring in due course effective pressure to secure governmental aid to further its exploitation of the Muslim countries. A survey of the Hindu commercial interests in the Middle East would show that they have spread a network in almost all Muslim countries, barring a few.

Such were the prospects of a Hindu Raj in a united India, which alarmed the Muslims. "Muslim India", said Mr. Jinnah, "cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. Hindus and Muslims brought together under a democratic system, forced upon the minorities, can only mean Hindu Raj. Democracy of the kind with which the Congress High Command is enamoured would mean the complete destruction of what is most precious in Islam." The Muslims asserted that they had ample experience of the working of the provincial constitutions for the last ten years. Mere paper safeguards had failed to check the mass massacres of more than 30,000 Muslims within a week in the Hindu province of Bihar in the winter of 1946. If there was to be lasting peace in this sub-continent it could be secured by measures which would assure to Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion and economic or other Muslim interests.

"It is only when Pakistan is established," said Mr. M. A. Jinnah at Cairo in December 1946, "that we (Indian Muslims and the Egyptians), should be really free, otherwise their will be the menace of a Hindu imperialist Raj spreading its tentacles right across the Middle East." Elaborating the point Mr. Jinnah stated, "If India will be ruled by Hindu imperialistic power, it will be as great a menace for the

future, if not greater, as the British imperialistic power has been in the past. Therefore, I think the whole of the Middle East will fall from the frying pan into the fire. The Middle East countries want to be free and self-governing and not subject to spheres of influence."

### **Birth of a State**

Despite all Hindu machinations, Pakistan as a result of Mr. Jinnah's brilliant leadership and the united support of the Indian Muslims emerged as the leading State of the Muslim World. Hailing its advent, the London "Times" on August 15, 1947, wrote, "Since the collapse of the Turkish Empire that world, which extends across the globe from Morocco to Indonesia has not included a state whose natural resources, and place in Islamic history gave it undisputed pre-eminence. The gap is now filled. From today Karachi takes rank as a new centre of Muslim cohesion and a rallying point for Muslim thought and aspiration."

The new Muslim State has remained, however, an eyesore to many Hindus. Labouring under the delusion that Pakistan would be overthrown before it had time to organise its army or recover from the disaster created by the wholesale massacre of Muslims, the Hindus have been bent on fomenting troubles. A grand scheme had consequently been hatched to expedite Pakistan's end. Even before Pakistan was established, the Hindu capitalists, who owned and controlled the entire finances of Western Pakistan, were persuaded to migrate to India. This was a part of the deliberate attempt to paralyse the economic life in the hope of delivering crippling blows to the new State. Simultaneously the dignitaries of the Indian Government began to talk

of the possibility of reunion on economic and other grounds. The Hindu Press supported the mischievous move on the plea that the acceptance of Pakistan was a temporary phase and that the whole sub-continent belonged to them. Even Muslim leaders residing in India were forced to issue statements pleading for the reunion of Pakistan and Hindustan.]

Under "a deeply laid and well-planned conspiracy", as Mr. Jinnah put it, a systematic campaign of "massacre of defenceless and innocent people far more heinous than atrocities committed by the worst tyrants known to history" was let loose. Mr. Charan Singh, a Parliamentary Secretary of an Indian provincial (U.P.) Government in a speech frankly stated, "If Muslim Leaguers believe that they acted rightly in working for the achievement of Pakistan, then they must in honesty voluntarily leave for Pakistan today, as tomorrow circumstances will compel them to do so." He was, however, willing to allow Muslims to live in the Indian Union only if they launched "an active and enthusiastic campaign for the unification of the two Dominions."

### **Massacre of Muslims**

The massacre of Muslims after the achievement of freedom by India started from the East Punjab. The tales how the Sikhs and Hindus conspired in India to kill Muslims is too long and sad to be repeated here. A rough estimate of the great killing can be formed from the reports of neutral observers. "A thousand times more horrible than anything we saw during the war", wrote the London "Times" special correspondent in Punjab, "is the universal comment of experienced officers, British and Indian, on the present slaughter in Punjab. The Sikhs are on the war path. They

are clearing Eastern Punjab of Muslims, butchering hundreds daily, forcing thousands to flee westward, burning Muslim villages and homesteads, even in their frenzy burning their own, too. This violence has been organised from the highest levels of Sikh leadership, and it is being done systematically, sector by sector. Some large towns, like Amritsar and Jullundur, are now quieter, because there are no Muslims left." He added, "Appalling atrocities have been committed; bodies have been mutilated; none has been spared—men, women, or children. In one village, out of 50 corpses, 30 were those of women. One Viceroy's Commissioned Officer found four babies roasted to death over a fire."

The administrative machinery in East Punjab remained collapsed for three months and even Delhi, the capital of India, came into the grip of rapacious hordes. Pandit Nehru receded into the background and the Fascist clique completely dominated the Indian Cabinet. That the mass killing of Muslims was pre-planned and organised was admitted by Pandit Nehru himself, when, in a desperate effort to recover his lost position and to release himself from the clutches of his Fascist colleagues, he made certain frank confessions. Addressing a public meeting in Lucknow, on October 19, 1947, Premier Nehru said, "The communal disturbances in India exposed the country to outside aggression and weakened its foundations ....A few groups had been organised in the Punjab who had made it their profession to murder people. The destruction of so much life was not accidental, but pre-planned. It was an attempt by the reactionary elements to paralyse the whole administrative machinery and usurp political power." Addressing a gathering of Congress workers and students in Delhi on November 3, 1947, Pandit Nehru

expressed his concern about Fascist tendencies which were spreading in certain sections of the people of India at present. He stated, "The demand for sending away all the Muslims from India and lawlessness prevailing at present was proving of great help to the reactionary elements, who were gradually gaining footholds in the social and political life of the people." The murder of Mr. Gandhi on January 30, 1948, whom the "Statesman" (India) described as the "one remaining beacon of tolerance and sanity amidst surrounding madness" convinced the whole world that the present ruling class in India could not even tolerate a pro-Muslim Hindu.

Not satiated with shedding the blood of its greatest leader, the present Fascist clique still aims at establishing a theocratic Hindu state which does not recognise the sanctity of the tradition and culture of the Muslim citizens. While in Pakistan the Hindus are *ipso facto* assumed to be loyal and treated as such, in India every Muslim is taken to be a fair target of attack and is subjected to all kinds of "sadistic tests".

In U.P., an Indian province, which has for many centuries been the main cultural centre of Muslims, strange things are still happening. The first thing that the Hindu majority of the U.P. Assembly did was to adopt an official resolution to transact the business of the House in the Hindi language written in the Devanagari script, which is not at all read or understood by Muslims. Without affording any opportunity to Muslims to adapt themselves to the changing conditions, they were almost asked to learn the language and script of the Hindus overnight.

### **Liaquat Ali's Efforts**

"My firm and undeviating objective, as also the objective of the Pakistan Government," said Premier Liaquat Ali on November 16, 1947, "is to eliminate by peaceful and honourable means all existing causes of friction between the two Dominions and to establish conditions which would enable ourselves and our Indian neighbours to live in friendliness and amity." When the ruthless killing of Muslims in East Punjab and the Delhi Province was in full swing, Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, Chief of the Pakistan Delegation to the U.N.O. General Assembly on September 16, 1947, said, "If this deliberate and planned extermination of a people continues unchecked by India, Pakistan as a last resort must seek satisfaction through the U.N.O." Sir Muhammad's statement caused great nervousness in New Delhi. In hot haste the Indian Government came out with a refutation through a Press note. The warning, however, fell on deaf ears and the Indian Government persisted in its policy of butchering Muslims. The Pakis'an Government in the third week of September 1947 made a formal proposal to the Indian Government asking that the Governments should jointly approach the U.N.O. and request that 12 neutral observers belonging to different nationalities should be immediately flown over to India and Pakistan. This request was again turned down by the Indian Government on the plea that outsiders should not be allowed to "pry" into their affairs. It was announced on September 28, 1947 that the Pakistan Government had exchanged communications with the British Government and other members of the Commonwealth with a view to stop the killing of Muslims in India. That nothing substantial came out of this appeal to the satisfaction of Pakistan is

evident by "Dawn's" editorial of November 14, 1947 under the caption "Why Are We in love with the British". The paper stated, "Be that as it may, there is no denying that we have in more ways than one let ourselves down by being so much in love with Mr. John Bull who does not reciprocate our affection for him nor seems to care much whether we sink or swim, although the queering of pool to our disadvantage is mostly his work."

While the British Government remained reticent, the Hindu Government in which the war-mongers rule the roost, went on encroaching Pakistan's territories. Hundreds of states, including Kapurthala, which had a Muslim majority, had acceded to the Indian Union but in no case did the Pakistan Government interfere in any way. Junagadh was the first to accede to Pakistan and it caused tremendous alarm in India. Resorting to Hitlerian shock-tactics, the Indian Government indulged in a complete economic blockade and finally sent contingent of troops, backed by a show of air and naval "might" to the vicinity of Junagadh.

The aggressive attitude of the Indian Government was greatly resented in Pakistan and bitterly criticised in all sections of the world Press. Writing under the caption, "Junagadh Again", the "Manchester Guardian", with the aid of a very apt parable, thoroughly exposed the aggressive designs of the Indian Government. The paper wrote, "There is an old Indian story of a holy man who believed in non-violence and was the inspiration and idol of his people. He hurt neither man nor beast nor even vegetable. But one day, chancing on a piece of iron, he relaxed his principle to the extent of chopping away a jungle weed which had grown across the entran-

ce to his cell. The next day he came upon a snake in the forest, and, growing used to his new tool, protected himself by dispatching it at one elbow. How he took the first step to violence. Within a year he was a chieftain, and within five he had the blood of tens of thousand on his head. Here, surely, is a parable on which the Indian Government should reflect in its dealings with Junagadh."

To remove all causes of friction the Pakistan Government referring to the Junagadh issue expressed its willingness even to discuss "conditions and circumstances in which plebiscite should be taken by any state or states." Pakistan could, with full justification and legal right, have sent their forces to Junagadh, but at no time since the accession was a single soldier sent by Pakistan to Junagadh and Pakistan's advice throughout to the State authorities was to exercise the greatest restraint. This did not appeal to the Hindu dictators. A "provisional government of Junagadh" was set up on Indian soil and its first act was to occupy the Junagadh state property in Rajkot, which was within the territory of Indian Government, and then it proceeded to violate the Junagadh territory and finally occupied it with the help of Indian armed forces. Manavadar, another state which had acceded to Pakistan and Mangrol and Babariawad were also occupied by Indian troops.

### **Kashmir**

More dastardly has been the aggression of India on Kashmir—a state which has 3,200,000 Muslims and only 800,000 Hindu Dogras. As a result of the misgovernment of the Hindu ruler, whose ancestors purchased the state from Britain at a paltry sum of Rs 75 000,000 the people of Kashmir are at present among the poorest in Asia. Failure to exploit



the resources has been due to the extravagant demand of the Kashmir Durbar from concessionaries. Kashmir has abundant timber, coal and other mineral resources. Its waters may be the source of electrical power. For Pakistan, the acquisition of Kashmir might make the difference between economic survival and collapse. Kashmir controls the head water upon which the Pakistan electricity and irrigation systems would be based. Its coal will be essential if West Punjab is to be industrialised. The importance of Kashmir is not only economic, it is also strategic. The occupation of Kashmir by the Indian Government would enable the latter to strike deadly blows on the northern frontier of Pakistan in the event of a war between the two states. It would also mean the regular inroads of predatory hordes in the rich and fertile valleys of Western Punjab. It would further afford opportunities to the Hindu Government to foster subversive movements in the Frontier province, where Hindu stooges were in power during the pre-freedom period.

Realising all these advantages but ignoring the fact that the conquest of Kashmir against the will of its people and the hostility of tribesmen would prove in the long-term a liability rather than an asset, the Indian Fascists succeeded in hatching a conspiracy with the Dogra ruler to exterminate the entire Muslim population. Soon after the massacre of Muslims in the East Punjab, the Indian hordes turned to Jammu and Kashmir. Posing as refugees, they came armed with modern weapons and were provided with more weapons by the state authorities. They started butchering Muslims with the same efficiency which they had shown in East Punjab. These outrages against Muslim life and property in Jammu and other parts of the state provided the provocation for

the internal rising. The people of Kashmir have many relatives in the bordering districts of N.W.F.P. and Punjab. In sheer desperation the people from Hazara and tribal areas consequently rushed to Kashmir to prevent their brethren from being massacred. The Indian Government openly came to the rescue of the bloodthirsty Raja. In hot-haste the ruler declared Kashmir's accession and India Government accepted it. Not the slightest reference was made to the wishes of the people.

Within a week after the entry of Indian forces in Kashmir the Governor-General of Pakistan made the following proposals to the Indian Governor-General: First, to put an immediate stop to fighting, the two Governor-Generals should be authorised by their respective Governments to issue a proclamation forthwith giving 48 hours' notice to the opposing forces to cease fire. Secondly, both the forces of the Indian Dominion and the tribesmen should withdraw simultaneously and with the utmost expedition from the state territory. Thirdly, the two Governor-Generals should be vested with full powers by the two Dominion Governments to restore peace, undertake the administration of Jammu and Kashmir State and arrange for a plebiscite without delay under their joint control and supervision. The Indian Government gave no official reply but Premier Nehru on November 6, 1946 told a New Delhi meeting that he had not the "slightest hesitation in holding a plebiscite in Kashmir". "What use is a referendum" retorted Premier Liaquat Ali after the voters have been driven away from their homes, or silenced in death." The Kashmir Muslims, however, continued to wage relentless war against the Dogra oppressors and Indian invaders. The Pakistan Premier again made an appeal

on November 16, 1947 to bring to an end the war between Kashmir Muslims and the Indian Government. Mr. Liaquat Ali stated, "We are ready to request the U.N.O. immediately to appoint its representative in Jammu and Kashmir State in order to put a stop to fighting and repression of Muslims in the State, to arrange the programme of withdrawal of outside forces, to set up an impartial administration of the State till a plebiscite is held and to undertake the plebiscite under its direction and control for the purpose of ascertaining the free and unfettered will of the people of the State on the question of accession. We are prepared to accept a similar solution of the dispute regarding Manavadar and Junagadh." The Indian war-mongers refused to listen to the sane proposals of Premier Liaquat Ali but when the position of Indian troops became untenable as a result of successive defeats the Kashmir issue was all of a sudden referred to the Security Council by India in December, 1947.

India charged that Pakistan was aiding the "raiders" who invaded Kashmir. Pakistan countercharged that India was an "invader" of Kashmir and widened the issue by including the Junagadh question. The Security Council, treading warily, adopted a method of "round-table private conferences." A few days after the proceedings, the Security Council voted to set up a three-man Commission on the lines of the Indonesian Committee, but its members were not appointed. After several meetings with Sir Zafarullah Khan of Pakistan and Mr. Gopalswamy Ayyanagar of India, M. Lagenhove, the Belgian President of the Security Council produced a resolution recommending a plebiscite in Kashmir under the authority and supervision of the Security Council. American, Chinese, French, British, Canadian and Syrian

members all seemed to like this Belgian draft. This and the general trend of the debate encouraged Pakistan's Delegation to propose a resolution which asked for all armed forces to be withdrawn from Kashmir and empowered the United Nations Commission to establish an "impartial interim administration."

When next the Council met it was under the shadow of Mahatma Gandhi's assassination. The stand of the Security Council members in favour of some kind of "neutral" administration remained unaltered. Explaining how the tribesmen could be induced to retire from Kashmir and Jammu, Senator Warren Austin, Leader of the U. S. Delegation stated: "That is the only way it can be done unless the tribesmen are satisfied that there is to be a fair plebiscite assured through an interim government that is in fact and has the appearance of being non-partisan." Reiterating the same views, the British Delegate, Mr. Phillip Noel-Baker, said: "Suppose we put this demand to Pakistan, and put it now, would the inhabitants of Poonch and Mirpur and Riasi lay down their arms? Would the volunteers from the West Punjab go home? Would the tribesmen obey the summons of the Security Council and go back to their barren uplands, or would our action have exactly the opposite effect? Would the tribesmen in their tens of thousands, the tribesmen who many of them have hitherto been persuaded to stay at home, come down flooding down to Kashmir as they believe they can?"

A few days later when Dr. T.F. Tsiang, the Chinese Delegate, became the Chairman of the Security Council, manouevrings started in full swing. A new draft resolution

was presented before the Council. Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan who saw in the new position an almost complete reversal of earlier stand in the Council, doubted whether his Government could agree. His summary was that "any plebiscite held under the Abdullah Government in a State which is occupied by troops of one side is not likely to satisfy anyone that it is impartial." Matters having now reached a virtual deadlock, Mr. Ayyanagar asked for a postponement of the debate. The Council seemed a little hesitant about this, which led to Mr. Ayyanagar's bitter speech accusing the Council of not having given his great country the consideration to which it was entitled. While Mr. Ayyanagar was in India, Council members continued private conversations in which the U.S. Delegation appeared to play a prominent part.

What transpired between India and other members of the Security Council during the interval is shrouded in mystery. The firm stand which the U.S. and U.K. had adopted with regard to an impartial plebiscite administration and the withdrawal of Indian troops from Kashmir underwent a radical change. The one-sided resolution moved by the Security Council President, Dr. Alfonso Lopez on April 17, 1948 and subsequently passed, was strongly opposed by Sir Muhammad Zafarullah.

The essence of the plan is that a plebiscite shall be conducted by an officer appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations acting under the authority of the State Government. This officer's powers will extend to direction and supervision of state military forces and police while the plebiscite is being held. It is also provided that when the five-member Commission of mediation and good offices is

satisfied that the tribesmen are withdrawing from Sthetate, India will begin the progressive withdrawal of its army. When the Indian forces shall have been reduced to the minimum strength, the stationing of the remaining troops will be 'carried out in accordance with the following principles (1) That the presence of troops shall not afford any intimidation or appearance of intimidation to the inhabitants of the State (2) That as small a number as possible should be retained in forward areas (3) That any reserve of troops which may be included in the total strength be located within their present area. It is also laid down that 'if these local forces should be found to be inadequate the Commission, subject to agreement of both the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan, should arrange for the use of such forces of either Dominion as it seems effective for the purpose of pacification. The resolution also asks the Government of India to 'undertake to ensure that the Government of the State invite major political groups to designate responsible representatives to share equally and fully in the conduct of the Administration at ministerial level while the Plebiscite is being prepared and carried on ''

The Security Council resolution is indeed not based on justice and fairplay. It recognises indirectly the accession of Kashmir to India without taking into consideration the legality of the issue. It further allows the Indian troops to continue within the territories of Kashmir without according the same right to Pakistan. It is difficult to imagine how the tribesmen would be persuaded to withdraw if the Indian troops persist in tyrannising the majority of inhabitants and the Muslims are not given a predominant share in the State Government. The

presence of Pakistani troops in Kashmir which was essential both for restoring confidence among the Muslims as well as exercising pressure on tribesmen has been provided for subject to the willingness of India and Pakistan.

While India, the latest reports indicate, is fighting shy of the U.N. Commission and refusing it all cooperation as a protest against the inclusion of the disputes relating to Junagadh, genocide and non-implementation of India-Pakistan agreements in the terms of the Commission, Pakistan has nominated Argentina on the Commission "under protest". It is yet to be seen whether the U.N. Commission consisting of J. K. Huddle (U.S.); Dr. Ricardo J. Siri (Argentina); Egbert Graeffe (Belgium); Josef Kojdel (Czechoslovakia) and Albert Gonsalez (Colombia), which is expected to reach Kashmir on July 1, 1948 would settle the dispute with justice or merely implement what has been preplanned by interested powers.

## Chapter IV

# MIDDLE EASTERN UNION

'The India Government's whole conduct", said Premier Liaquat Ali on November 16, 1947, "is based on 'might is right' and on the belief that Pakistan is unable to fight them. If the India Government are allowed to follow their imperialist land-grabbing policy, this will have repercussions not only in Asia but throughout the world".

The belief in Pakistan's weakness has led even many apostles of non-violence and pacifism to threaten Pakistan with war. The Indian war-monger's belief in Pakistan's weakness is surely not based on facts. Pakistan may appear to be in a tattered state to the jaundiced vision of a Hindu or Sikh and may lack certain material things but there is no denying the fact that the Muslim State has all the things that really matter. The elements of national power, constituting the war potential of a State are supposed to be population (or more specifically, military man-power), civilian morale, national unity, standing armies, naval tonnage, merchant shipping, foreign trade, foreign investments, gold reserves, National wealth and income, agrarian resources and total industrial production. None of these factors is decisive. The state which possesses the largest number of these items is supposed to be the most powerful. If we utilise these items as criteria of power, neither India nor Pakistan in their present state can favourably compare with the first rate powers of the world. The tremendous upheaval brought about as a result of the partitioning has inflicted shattering blows on the economies of the two states. A war started at present



between India and Pakistan might be a long drawn battle, with no definite results. And as "Dawn" said the "spirit of a people defending their dear country is worth millions of tons of armaments".

Armaments depend upon population, economic resources and technology. The Government of India's resources might be greater but they can never reach a point, where the Indian Government could feel certain of victory in war and could impose their will by the pressure of military superiority. The Indian Government in their war against the defenceless people of Kashmir have already felt the weakness of their much-boasted State. The dogged will of the unaided Kashmiris is undoubtedly causing much headache to the Indian politicians.

The speed with which Pakistan is progressing, it will have ready for instant use weapons of a sufficient caliber and in sufficient number to protect itself from attack. Expressing the hope that Pakistan would be a stable State, Sir Archibald Rowlands, the famous British financial expert stated 'Pakistan starts on its career with four great advantages. First, it has an active and robust people. Secondly, it has a compact and stable political structure which unlike that of some other countries, is free from fissiparous tendencies. Thirdly, it has plenty of the primary requirements of life, namely food. Lastly, it has a favourable balance of trade with the outside world". Forecasting the possibilities of industrialisation, Sir Archibald said, "Pakistan is an agricultural country. But so were Canada, Australia, Argentina, and even the U.S. at one time. Pakistan has great natural resources which can be developed in the same way as other Western countries have done".

An authoritative survey of the potentialities of Pakistan shows that the Muslim State is far superior in several respects to India. The survey reveals that the total area sown in 1938-39 was 43.9 million acres as against 209.4 million acres sown in British India. The percentage of the Pakistan area to the total area sown in British India was 20.9. The two main food crops of Pakistan are wheat and rice, while rice is the staple food of Eastern Pakistan, wheat is the staple food of Western Pakistan. The total area under rice in 1944-45 in the territory that is now Pakistan was 23.6 million acres as against 78.8 million acres in India. This formed 32.5 per cent of the total acreage under rice in India. While its yield was 8.9 million tons, the total yield of the British India being 26 $\frac{1}{2}$  million tons. The share of Pakistan comes to 33.7 per cent of the total Indian yield. As a result of partition a considerable part of the wheat growing areas have come over to Pakistan. Other cereals like barley, jowar and bajra do not much affect the food situation of Pakistan as these commodities, although produced on a minor scale, are mostly sent elsewhere for consumption. Normally 20,000 tons of these are exported. Sind and Western Punjab also export gram to the extent of about 128,000 tons yearly.

The areas producing raw jute, the golden fibre of Bengal, have largely come over to Eastern Pakistan. But the jute mill industry is mostly located in Calcutta and its suburbs. The yield of raw jute is estimated at 4,076,000 bales (one bale is equal to 400 lbs) for Pakistan while for India it is 1,474,500, the percentage for Pakistan coming to 73.4. The yield in West Bengal, according to the same forecast, is to be about half a million bales, while Nepal, Bihar, Assam and Orissa are to yield about one million bales.

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Karachi is the chief port for exporting the Pakistan cotton to India and abroad. From September 1, 1946 to August 14, 1947, Karachi sent out 1,160,000 bales. Of these about four lakh bales were exported to Bombay; 177,000 to other Indian ports and some 600,000 bales to countries overseas mainly to the United Kingdom, China and countries in Europe. Of tea it is calculated that Pakistan will have about 30 million pounds of tea available for export as compared to India's 400 million pounds. According to figures available the area now in Pakistan under tobacco in 1938-39 was 480,700 acres—which is about 33 per cent of the total Indian acreage under tobacco. It produced 2,150,300 tons of tobacco giving a percentage of 33.7 to the total of British India production. Pakistan produces coal, petroleum, chromite, gypsum, salt building materials. and a very small quantity of gold.

Pakistan has vast potential resources as its sub-soil wealth. Her deposits of coal, iron and oil are believed to be considerable, but they are not yet fully tapped. According to the seven-year Programme of Industrialisation and Economic Development which the Government is considering, it is hoped Pakistan will be self-sufficient in coal, petroleum and iron. But at present there is a great deficiency of coal in Pakistan. During the year 1944 the production of coal in West Punjab was 175,100 tons. Sind, which produced nothing before, produced about 60,000 tons of coal the same year. This production is, of course, not enough for the growing need of Pakistan. Punjab produced 5,100 tons of saltpetre in 1944. In the year 1944 there were two petroleum zones, one of which lies in the West Punjab, the production of which in 1944 was 51,157,100 gallons. Recently oil has been

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discovered at two places in Eastern Pakistan in the Chittagong and Sylhet districts. Moreover, Eastern Pakistan is believed to be rich in its oil resources. Prospecting has begun and it is expected that oil will come out in considerable quantity. Cocoa has also been discovered in Chittagong and in the region of Peshawar. Experts are busy in finding out its quality and quantity. In 1944 the area now in Pakistan produced about 25 000 tons of gypsum.

The position of cotton in Pakistan has improved. Pakistan's entire cotton comes from Western Punjab, N.W.F.P. and Sind. The area under cultivation in 1944-45 in Western Pakistan was 29,50 000 acres, while the yield was 1,210,000 bales. The percentage of Pakistan's cotton products to the total Indian cotton (3.5 million bales) comes to 34.2. The total value of cotton produced in Pakistan thus comes to 45 crores of rupees. Near the N.W.F.P. there is a very big slate mine at Khewra which it is reliably learned, has a producing capacity of about 92,000 tons yearly.

As stated before Pakistan is essentially an agricultural country. There are no large-scale industries, but the Pakistan Government is considering a scheme for the rapid industrialisation of both Eastern and Western Pakistan. The Sind Government has sanctioned an initial sum of Rs. 2,500,000 for the development of special industrial areas in the province. The whole scheme, it is understood, is likely to cost about Rs. 12,500,000 and will take about four years to finally materialise. After the partition sixteen cotton mills, nine sugar mills, five cement mills, four glass mills and one woollen mill came to Pakistan as they were located in that area. There are two petroleum refineries in West Punjab. Though

there are no big iron and steel manufacturing centres in Pakistan, there are 34 railway workshops both in Eastern and Western Pakistan, and these can be used for minor industrial works. In Western Pakistan there are more than a dozen flour mills which cater for the needs of the people. The total number of workers employed in mills and factories in Pakistan is 62,000 as compared to about a million in India.

Both Eastern and Western Pakistan carry a good deal of internal and external trade. The port of Chittagong is being developed for exporting rice and jute. The export trade of Western Pakistan is mainly carried through Karachi. These included among others, cotton, wheat, rice, hides and skins, bones, oilseeds etc. The principal importing countries were Great Britain, the U.S., China, Afghanistan, Belgium, Iran and Italy. The value of total export entering through Karachi, during the same period was Rs. 48.8 crores. The main items of imports were iron and steel goods, machinery, mill stores, manufactured goods, food and drink, tobacco, cotton and woollen yarn, metals, oils, paper, glassware, drug and medicines and various kinds of raw materials. Peshawar is the centre of exporting and importing goods to and from Afghanistan. Finally the average tonnage for steamers, entered and cleared in foreign trade at the port of Karachi during 1946-47 was 3,762 tons.

Though the resources of the Indian Government and Pakistan compared to the size and population of their territories are evenly balanced, the Hindu Fascist clique in the Indian Cabinet still feels that they should wage war against Pakistan. This desire is not based on rational objectives but as a means of affording a bloody catharsis for the

public discontent growing as a result of acute economic distress and capitalistic control in India. If no amount of suppression suffices to ensure the stability of the present Brahmin-Bania raj, the ruling group may find it expedient to direct popular resentments against the Indian Muslims, who are already being persecuted, to satiate the Hindu-Sikh thirst for blood, with a corresponding inculcation of hatred for Pakistan and glorification of militarism. This is evident by the bellicose tone of the Indian press. In a much-publicised article, "Hindustan Times" the official Congress organ and the mouth-piece of Birla, the biggest Indian industrialist, stated recently "The country must be put on a war footing. Britons hold key positions in the Civil administration and armed forces of Pakistan. They hold important posts in the Indian Army. There can be no divided loyalty at the present time. If any Briton feels he cannot take sides in war, he has no place here".

### **Britain's Role**

While the Hindu imperialism is gathering strength, Britain is pursuing a more liberal policy towards the Muslim States. The British Military High Command has already called for the shifting of main base from the Middle East to East Africa. Captain B.H. Liddel Hart wrote, "We must also take account of the extent to which our present concern with the Suez route burdens us with political and military commitments in peace that tend to increase the danger of war. Beyond all the local complications of our covering position in the Near and Middle East lies the fact that it brings us into contact and conflict of interests with Russia throughout that zone. Moreover as our bases lie in territory that is not ours, it is easy

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for Russia to foster subversive movements, and thus undermine our position. The suggested re-orientation would combine the advantages of a sound strategic policy with those of a peaceful policy. For it would create the most effective and 'pacific' kind of zone between our own sphere and Russia's sphere, a wide desert belt. Friction always tends to develop wherever frontiers rub against one another. Conversely it tends to diminish in proportion to the extent of separation. We have little to lose, and much to gain, in mooted the idea of making the Middle East a neutral zone—a part of a natural security plan between us and Russia. Such a neutral zone would be so spacious, and so sparse as to form a real buffer". The above view is, however, not shared by the Tory Press. The British journal 'Tribune' in an article headed, "Defeatists in High Places" pointing out the political disadvantages of a policy of withdrawal stated that in the first instance, Turkey would certainly have to abandon her opposition to Russian projects in the Middle East. More serious than Turkish reaction in the Tribune's view was the fact that if Britain withdrew from the Mediterranean area, the U.S.A. would definitely enter. "It is obvious the U.S.A. would not stand idle, while the British pulled out of the Middle East".

Whether the British statesmen would adopt the policy suggested by the British Military experts or that laid down by the London Tory Press is difficult to foretell. The decision to evacuate Palestine has been made with the full realisation that Muslim people deserve a more generous policy. The bold stand taken by Sir Alexander Cadogan, the British delegate, in the Security Council both against the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

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confirms the belief that Britain is more faithful to the Arabs than other foreign powers.

### **American Influence**

The growing American influence in the Middle East is a source of great concern to every well-wisher of the Muslim States. During the second World War, American money was spent without any restraint in constructing the transportation and communication links across the Middle East. Many of the air bases built in this region were the results of American efforts. Colossal money was also spent for construction of links for the use of land and water carriers. Besides this the U.S. Government gave its ungrudging support to Britain in the operation of the Middle East supply centre. It was this agency, which by encouraging local agriculture and industry made the entire region self-sufficient during those critical days when shipping was unsafe. This support was not given merely to fight for a righteous cause. The American big business had a long-range plan of stabilising its position with a view to exploit the region economically after the cessation of hostilities. This is proved by the fact that since Mr. James M. Landis, the Chief U.S. representative in the Middle East Supply Centre returned to U.S.A., he had been urging a strong policy in the Middle East for opening up the area to American trade. American air lines and shipping companies are now anxious to retain the facilities acquired during the war. The U.S. Government is also taking an active interest. It has already constructed several bases in this region. In February 1946 the American signed a pact with Turkey which gives them the right to establish a chain of airfields across that country. In November, 1946, it was reported that the U.S.



Army had developed the enormous airport at Dharan on the Persian Gulf Coast of Saudi Arabia into its most important air base in the sprawling area of the Middle East

Few persons realise that British interests in the Middle East today are being duplicated and matched by American interests. The American oil concession in Saudi Arabia will, in a measurable period, attain or surpass the output of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, whose Abadan refineries are the world's largest. American companies already hold a 23 per cent interest in the Iraqi Petroleum Company and, before long, construction will begin of an American pipe-line from Saudi Arabia paralleling the line from Iraq to Palestine and the Lebanon. The U.S. interest in Iran, as evidenced by the appointment of Military Commission are well advertised. Political interests involve military commitments and the U.S. Secretary of the Navy, Mr Forrestal, has plainly stated that one of the purposes of having American war vessels in European waters, including the Mediterranean, is to support American interests and policies. Although her direct interests in the Mediterranean are not as great as those of Britain, the U.S. has now more naval units in the Mediterranean Sea than any of the powers

Will America and Britain, which is weakened at home and faced by increasingly difficult problems in the overseas empire, unite to maintain their interests? Doubts are expressed by Paul Hannah who in a remarkable article states, "Here, too, however, there are germs of conflict. The Arabs are not unready to play off the Americans against the British and the British against the Americans. The establishment of the Anglo-American Commission under the newly-

drafted petroleum agreement may not solve all the tangled diplomacy of oil. The sterling block's grip on the foreign exchange of the Middle East prevents a rapid expansion of markets for American goods and arouses loud complaints against British Imperialism for American exporters. Finally, American suspicion of British experiments in Socialism tends to make Anglo-American co-operation in any sphere difficult. Even if these difficulties are overcome and the U.S. co-operates with Britain in the Middle East, the co-operation may take the form of economic and political imperialism of a type which will bring both powers into conflict alike with the native peoples and with Russia".

### **The Red Menace**

The danger to the Middle East in the post-war period does not only come from India, Britain and America but also from the Soviet Union. Russia, actuated partly a desire for greater security is said to be anxious to find a warm water outlet in the Persian Gulf and establishing herself in the Eastern Mediterranean. Today Russia is pressing Turkey for the readjustment of the frontiers of the provinces of Ardahan, Kars and Artvin and also for a revision of the Montreaux Convention of 1906, which would give the U.S.S.R. a voice in the control of the Straits at Istanbul and would permit the free passage even in war-time of Russian naval vessels from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. Heavily staffed Soviet Embassies have recently been established in Egypt and Iraq and attempts are being made to achieve closer contacts with the Arab people.

The reasons why Russia backed the Jewish demand for partitioning of Palestine in the U.N.O. are ably summed up

an Arab commentator. Pointing out the advantages he stated that Russia calculated that in case of a general break out in the Middle East only the U.S. and British interests would be harmed while Russia will get a chance of sending her troops in this area which has so far been supposed to be an Anglo-American sphere. Russia is hoping and justifiably that among the few more hundred thousand Jewish immigrants that would come into the Jewish State in Palestine, there might be a high proportion of Communists.

The fierce barrage of Soviet propaganda on the refusal of the Iranian Majliss to ratify the oil agreement has created a dangerously explosive atmosphere. The Iranians fear the political dangers attached to the granting of any commercial concession to the Russians. They rightly maintain that it would be best if Iran herself developed the oil, and point out that they have passed a law to enable them to sell the oil they develop to Russia. The Russian keenness to secure oil concessions is also understandable. According to some shrewd thinkers, Russia is now more interested in advancing towards the East than towards the West.

In 1945, they say, Russia was presented with great opportunity in the West. Her prestige was immense and the left wing movement in Europe was in full force. Russia threw away her opportunity because "she could not bring herself to come to terms with the European liberal tradition, which Western Europe, even in its new inclination towards Communism, was resolved to preserve". The Marshall Plan has further banged the door against Russia. "The Soviet Government" says Manchester Guardian, "might therefore start on a more active Asiatic policy with a confidence that it has

a way with Asiatic peoples. Consider also its opportunities in the Asia which lies beyond Russia's borders. Persia is a decrepit state, thinly populated, with a depressed peasantry and a wealthy and effete upper class. Afghanistan is a mosaic of several small races. By partition, India has been turned from a country into a geographical expression, its armies are in dissolution and the future of each Dominion is dubious".

### **A Sound Policy**

Such is the background against which the recent troubles in this region should be examined and alternatives should be found out to solve this toughest problem of the post-war world. The U.N.O. might succeed in reconciling the conflicting imperialistic interests, but as the world is to be motivated for a long time by intense nationalism, by fear of military insecurity, by the rivalries of economic and political imperialism and by ideological conflicts between capitalistic and collectivistic economies, this knotty problem might defy a clear solution without a united front of the Muslim states. The academicians and the theorists have made idealistic suggestions for easing the situation. Whether the big powers attach any importance to these is difficult to believe.

All are agreed that Russia, Britain and America should give up their traditional policy of treating the Middle Eastern states as pawns in the opening gambit of the next world war. "In brief, the only sound British strategy" in the Middle East, says Mr. R.H.S. Crossman, Labour M.P. "is a sound political policy. Our policy makers and diplomats, by a self-denying ordinance, should forbid themselves to study military maps or to count up divisions, and should turn their attention to

irrigation, trade and social welfare. They should not forget the weakness of the ruling class in many Arab States, and they should give positive encouragement to the progressive forces among the middle classes the students and the skilled workers whose contempt for British opportunism is only equalled by their hatred for the machinations of their own politicians. The way to prevent the Arab world from swinging over to Russia is not to pay danegeld in Palestine, but to convince the Arabs throughout the Middle East that they have something to gain in terms of social welfare and economic freedom from friendship and collaboration with Great Britain."

The same advice can be given to the U.S. Government. The establishment of a chain of air-bases, the bid for oil contracts, and the U.S. policy of creating factions in the Arab League does not augur well for America's future. The politically-minded people are already grumbling against the increasing U.S. ascendancy. Unless the U.S. Government moves with caution it would arouse the fiercest hatred of the nationalists and with the liquidation of the reactionary element in these countries, the American interests might be the principal targets of attack. The outbreak of Palestinian war has already made the U.S. the most hated power in the Middle East.

By the same token, a Russian policy of aggrandisement will inexorably be regarded as such a threat to national liberties of the people of this region that they would be forced to solicit the support of other powers. The Muslim world expected that the Soviet Union would support the oppressed Muslims in their fight against the Anglo-Saxon

imperialism but such hopes have been belied as a result of Russian territorial demands on Iran and Turkey and its cold attitude towards Pakistan. The present Russian policy has alienated the sympathies of a considerable section of the people who have always been ardent supporters of progressive ideas. The Soviet Union can no doubt give its moral support to liberal forces in Middle East but there is absolutely no justification for her to encourage subversive movements through hostile press and propaganda, agents and subsidies. The time is fast approaching when the have-nots in this region would themselves expropriate the expropriators. To inspire confidence among Muslims the best thing the Soviet Government can do is to revert back to its previous policy of neutrality and friendship such as it adopted towards Muslim States till a decade after the Russian Revolution.

## **The Cleavages**

The success of the imperialists is entirely due to the weakness of the Muslim States. Though the Arab League has been established but yet complete unity has not been achieved. The League is rather a loose federation because it cannot enforce any of its decisions. Only unanimous decisions are binding on all members, while those taken by a majority of voters bind only those countries voting in favour of them. Due to conflicting economic and political interests it has been virtually difficult to achieve unanimity among the seven member-States of the Arab League. In June, 1945, meeting on the subject of Syria's trouble with French occupying troops, Iraq offered the use of its army but the Syrians refused because they felt such assistance might serve as a pretext for Iraq's gaining a foothold in the country. In the meeting

on the Palestine problem at Bludan in June, 1946, the Iraqi delegation was reported to have proposed economic sanctions against the U.S. in retaliation for U.S. support for Jewish migration to Palestine. This view was categorically opposed by the Saudi Arabian delegates who were alleged to have been influenced by the fact that a very considerable portion of their country's budget was provided by the U.S. royalties

A storm raged over the statement made in Cairo in November, 1946, by the Foreign Minister of Transjordan, Muhammad Pasha Shureiki on the necessity for implementing the "Greater Syria" Scheme (federation between Iran, Syria and Transjordan under a Hashemite monarch) and the sharp rejoinder of the Lebanese Foreign Minister Philip Tagla, expressing Lebanon's absolute rejection to entertain the idea of discussing the project. The incident was followed up closely by a unanimous resolution adopted by the Syrian Chamber of Deputies on November 23, 1946, rejecting the scheme. The Lebanon Chamber followed suit two days later. It had become common knowledge then that the 'Greater Syria' scheme envisaged the absorption of the Arab portion of Palestine into Transjordan, should the partition plan, so strongly advocated, be implemented.

The fantastic dreams of the Transjordanian imperialists then foundered on the rock of opposition offered by Syria, the Lebanon, Palestinian Arabs, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. It was also reported that Britain as a result of vehement condemnation of the 'Greater Syria' scheme by Arab nationalists had adopted a negative attitude towards Emir Abdullah's visions of a Transjordanian empire. General Sir Edward Spears, formerly British Minister of State, in the Levant, who toured

the Arab countries as a guest of Arab League told a Beirut audience that Britain would not "look with favour" on any plan such as the 'Greater Syria' Scheme that might cause discord among the Arab States. Even Nuri-el-Said Pasha, the first approver of the scheme, denounced it.

### **Glimmerings of Hope**

It should not, however, be forgotten that the present differences are due to conditions which will gradually vanish. The disunity is in fact encouraged by foreign powers to suit their own interests. The imperialists had so far been getting ready-made instruments in the older generation of politicians, many of them trained in clan leadership, blood feuds and treating politics as a matter of personal deeds and personal alliances. This class of politicians is fast disappearing. The younger generation of political leaders, drawn chiefly from the graduates of Cairo and Beirut are far more ardently nationalist than their elders. It is this class which has made the imperialists nervous. The threat of the real Arab unity and the very loud demands which the Arab League had made of the British at London Conference on Palestine in September 1946 raised the question of whether the British created a Frankenstein when they encouraged the formation of the League. It is evident that the foreign powers no longer find the Muslim countries pliable tools in their hands.

The younger generation of the Arab leaders consider the Arab League as the authentic answer to their long-held and mounting desire for the unification of the Muslim States, which possess the common bond of the Muslim religion and the urge for complete freedom. The fact is that even with-



out the Caliphate a more powerful idea of Islamic solidarity has originated, not for any glorification of the religion but as a protest and as a means of defence against the all devouring imperialism of the west. An authority on affairs in the Middle East states that the very fact that on the issue of Palestine all the Arab states are united and fighting "is an incontrovertible witness to the spiritual union of Islam and a measure by which the forces making for political union can be gauged" Professor Toynbee finds signs of Islamic resurgence in Egypt. He simply asks, "If Egypt for the Egyptians was a war-cry that was to be taken in earnest, were not the vast majority of the Egyptians simply peasants whose only idea of civilization was Islam? Was a resurgence of Islamic religious fervour to be the ultimate fruit of political labours of a generation of Egyptian politicians whose only idea of civilization for their part had been the secular rationalist nationalism of a post-revolutionary France" Discussing the future of Iraq, A. J. Arberry wrote "It is therefore possible that the nationalism whose eager roots are spreading and strengthening through all the Middle East may graft itself into this older plant and blossom with less parochian nationalism than a cess-board of small states, whose discords make trouble in the world. Strange things have happened, and the unification of the Arabian peoples will come, if it comes at all, through the material support and assistance of Britain, and through the spiritual unity of Islam". In recent years, as Gibb says, among the younger generation there is "considerable respect for Islamic tradition" and a more realistic perception of political and economic facts and a clearer understanding of processes of history. All enlightened Muslims are trying to steer a middle course, described as selecting the best elements from both the East and the West.

## The Everlasting Bond

The jubilation expressed throughout the Middle East at the birth of Pakistan has itself proved beyond doubt that a strong bond unites the Muslims of the world. When the Indian Muslims, under severe handicaps, were striving for the establishment of Pakistan, they received no encouragement from the Middle Eastern powers. Some of the Arab dignitaries, led away by the false mischievous propaganda of the enemies of Islam, even condemned the proposition of Pakistan. The isolationist stand taken by the Kemalists Turkey, in which Indian Muslims had pinned great hopes, made their disappointment all the more acute. The Turkish attitude was also much misrepresented by the interested parties with a view to create a wedge between the Indian Muslims and the rising Muslim power. Dispassionately analysing, we find that the Turkish policy pursued from 1924 to 1939 cannot be much criticised. A Turkish statesman, ably defending the policy, according to Tonybee and Kirkwood, stated, "Turkey has poured out her blood and treasure long enough in fighting the battles of Islam. In doing this she has almost sacrificed her national existence, and it has needed the supreme effort of 1919-23 to save it ..... The west need no longer fear, and other Muslim peoples need no longer hope, that we shall wish to champion the cause of every Muslim people that is struggling to throw off the yoke of Western domination. As far as that yoke weighed upon us, we have broken it single-handed. Let other Islamic peoples prove their worth by fighting their own battles as we have fought ours. We shall look on sympathetically, but we shall be slow to interfere. After six centuries of war for Islam and twelve years of war

for our own existence, it is time for us to rebuild our ruins and attend to our own affairs."

That Turkey now admires and esteems the sacrifices which Indian Muslims had made for the establishment of Pakistan is evident by the Press comments in Turkey. Writing in September 1947 the correspondent of London 'Times' in Turkey stated, "The creation of Pakistan, a Muslim state with a population of about 70,000,000 people equal in this respect to all Middle Eastern countries put together — is an event causing great sentimental satisfaction here, with a tinge of concern regarding its repercussions in the Muslim world after the lapse of the initial period organisation of the new State",

The Turkish fear that the strengthening of ties among Muslim people will promote reaction, Pan-Islamism and shall have destructive repercussions on the political and social development of each particular country still remains to be allayed. The suspicion is entirely due to the mischievous propaganda systematically carried on by the enemies of Indian Muslims that Pakistan aimed at resuscitating Pan-Islamism. Despite Mr. Jinnah's unequivocal declaration in May, 1946, in an interview to Mr. Donald Edwards, B. B. C.'s correspondent that Pan-Islamism was a "bogey", the lie is being continuously repeated with a view to create a gulf between Pakistan and other Muslim States, looking to the nationalist regeneration of the Middle East rather than a religious union. There is no doubt that in Pakistan Muslims have been more attached to their religion than in Turkey but it does not mean that Muslims have been thinking of reviving the Caliphate or some super-state. The only difference between Kemalist Turkey and Jinnah's Pakistan is that

while Atatürk carried too far the State's control in religious matters, which took an anti-religious form, Mr. Jinnah is not prepared to restrict by law the powers of the clergy as long as they by their interference in secular affairs do not obstruct reforms and progress. That Mr. Jinnah's policy is a sane one is borne out by the fact that the present Turkish regime, headed by İsmet İnönü, has also felt the necessity of relaxing State's control over religion. "Reaction", wrote London 'Times' correspondent in Turkey in September, 1947, "became so widespread as to compel the Government to make some concessions, allowing, three months ago, the opening of special schools for the teaching of religion on condition that attendance at such schools should be voluntary and the matters taught controlled by the State—and seminaries for training Imams and preachers for the mosques". Though the Islamic influence has receded from the conscious mind, it still remains in the vast subconscious. The time is fast approaching when Turkey, if not from any other consideration at least by way of expediency, would have to utilise religion for seeking collaboration with the neighbouring States. This is manifest in a speech of the President of Turkey. İsmet İnönü, according to a message of the Arab News Agency broadcast in December, 1947, said, "Our brotherly relations with the entire Arab World, with whom we lived together for centuries extend every day and in all domains". He also spoke of the friendship between his country, Egypt, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Similar are the feelings in Iran, where the massacres of Muslims in East Punjab caused much concern and alarm. In a cable to Mr. Ghazanfar Ali Khan, Minister for Refugees, Pakistan, the Iranian Premier, M. Qavam-

es-Sultaneh while expressing the hope that "very soon the present difficulties and sorrows will disappear" stated, "The Government and people of Iran on account of their feelings for their co-religionists will render all possible help for relieving the sorrow and affliction of the refugee Muslims of Pakistan." The Pakistan Premier and the Pakistan Press expressed deep gratitude to the Iranian Premier for his promise of help and support.

The unexpected notes presented by the Afghan Governments to the Indian and British Governments on the morrow of Pakistan's birth in regard to certain territories on the Pakistan-Afghan borders caused much misgivings about the future relations of the two neighbouring States. Pakistan's Governor-General Qaid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah availed of the earliest opportunity of sending his Personal Representative, Nawab Saidullah Khan to Afghanistan who was received with cordiality. Soon After H.M. King Zahir Shah sent his first Special Representative, Sardar Najibullah Khan to Pakistan who while presenting his credentials referred to Mr. Jinnah as the "champion of the independence of the largest Muslim community and the founder of Pakistan". Afghanistan, he added, desired with the "Islamic country of Pakistan" not only "temporary diplomatic arrangements which can be shaken and disturbed by small events and the slight wind of affairs" but much stronger "ties and relations." As regards the conflicting claims in regard to the tribal areas Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah said, "I hope that the two Governments will soon be able to settle and adjust in a spirit of goodwill for the benefit of both all those matters which require our immediate attention."

The Arab States too have expressed their joy at the establishment of the new Muslim State. Abdur Rahman Azzam Pasha, Secretary-General of the Arab League in a Press interview in London stated, "In wishing them the very best, we pledge our support and future co-operation which will take place between the Arab States and Pakistan."

Of all the Arab countries, Egypt has shown unusual interest in Pakistan. Not only an Egyptian diplomatic representative has been appointed in Pakistan but important Egyptian pressmen and an Egyptian commercial delegation have visited the new state. The unreserved expressions of sympathy with Pakistan have earned the Egyptians the everlasting goodwill of the citizens of Pakistan.

The sympathies of other Arab countries towards Pakistan are well-known. Saudi Arabia had always held in esteem Qaid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah and when famine broke out in Bengal in 1943, King Ibn Saud sent his own contribution to the President of All India Muslim League. Similarly Emir Abdullah of Transjordan, much before Pakistan was established, expressed the hope that the new Muslim State would join the Islamic bloc. Iraq has already agreed to send her diplomatic representative to Pakistan. Other Arab States such as Syria and the Lebanon are likely to follow suit.

### **United Front Needed**

While there is a consensus of opinion in every Muslim country that the establishment of a solid bloc of the Middle Eastern States and Pakistan would enable them to stand firm against an aggressive move from any quarter, great or small, there is no concrete effort to arrive at some common written

agreement. The Arab League does not include within its fold non-Arab States such as Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan and therefore ceases to be a very effective body. The question whether the Arab League should be liquidated to yield place to a League of Middle Eastern States and Pakistan is debatable. There is, however, no doubt about the desirability of the formation of a Middle Eastern union besides the Arab League, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and the Arab States. That there are forces which are working to torpedo the formation of such a bloc cannot also be denied. The bid for Arab leadership, the 'Greater Syria' scheme, the Afghan claim over certain territories in Pakistan's tribal area, the Iranian-Afghan dispute over the irrigation water in Herat, the Turkish-Syrian dispute over Alexandretta are some of the difficulties to be surmounted. None of them are, however, of a very grave nature. The Afghan claim is already being discussed by the two parties and it is hoped that the negotiations would bear fruits. The Iranian-Afghan and the Syrian-Turkish disputes can also be amicably settled. The war against Zionism has already united the Arab States and unity now is an assured fact.

The continued independence of Muslim States has so far been due to the fact that they are located at the tension points between rival imperialisms. Neither of the rival Powers wished the other to enlarge its territory by annexing the intervening buffer states. The latter have played off one against the other. Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan have consequently profited by conflicts between Russia, Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria and Hungary.

The Soviet-American agreement in recognising the "Israel State" has shocked the diplomats of the Middle East, who so far were under the false impression that they could at least expect the sympathies of one of the two great powers. For once they have now been convinced that absolute reliance on either of the two groups of powers will result in futility. Those who shape the policies of the Middle Eastern States now realise that a solid separate bloc owing allegiance to the U.N.O. can alone enable them to escape from diplomatic dictation or military attack. Not only the U.S. and U.K. will value the strength of such a combination but the Soviet Russia too, deviating from its present policy of hostility, would then covet the friendship of the Muslim States.

The Muslim statesmen also realise that political alignments can become actual ones, only when the interests of the allies are common. Such alliance, on permanent basis, is only possible among the Muslim States, which are bound together by ties of geographical contiguity, strategic and economic needs, religion and history. A real agreement among these potential allies can alone ward off the menace of Hindu, Russian, American and British imperialisms. The Muslim State or States, which will be inhibited from making common cause by fallacious hopes that these menacing imperialisms will attack others and leave them in peace, will be left in isolation and condemned to annihilation.







